

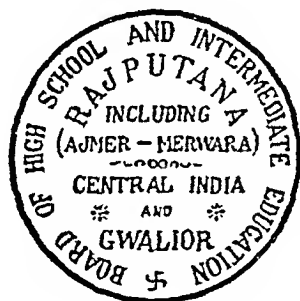
# SELECTIONS IN PROSE

(For Intermediate Classes)

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## INTRODUCTION

The selections included in this volume are intended for Intermediate Students of the Board of High School and Intermediate Education, Rajputana (including Ajmer-Merwara), Central India and Gwalior. They are for a period of five years with changes of prescription from the book itself in the interval.

The Intermediate student has been looked upon here as one who will soon be entering upon the higher responsibilities of the Degree course and an attempt has been made to introduce him to the great masterpieces of prose literature in the English language. The selections are generally in chronological order, to enable the student to acquire, even unconsciously, a sense of the development of English literature. Starting with such great prose-writers of the eighteenth century as Addison, Steele and Goldsmith, we pass on to the nineteenth century and selections are included here from Charles Lamb, De Quincey, Macaulay, Carlyle, Ruskin and others. A special feature is the inclusion of several pieces from recent and contemporary writers, lest the student should imagine that the history of English literature stopped with some of the classical writers of the nineteenth century.

As in the case of English poetry, the higher achievements of English prose should be inseparably associated with English life and civilisation, but it is undoubtedly

an advantage to the Indian student to be able to read, at least sometimes, about the background of his own country in the literature placed into his hands. This accounts for the inclusion of such pieces as *Rajputana and the Rajputs* by Sir Edwin Arnold and *A Study of Benares* by Sister Nivedita (Margaret Noble).

A volume of selections of this kind will have failed in its duty, if it did not familiarise the student with various kinds of English composition, each of which has got a special *technique* of its own, apart from the general qualities of genius on the part of the writers. Special attention has been paid to this need in the volume. There are all kinds of passages, descriptive, narrative, expository and persuasive. In fact, the selections could be arranged under these varieties of composition and a good teacher will utilise this feature for special study and treatment.

The range of good literature is so extensive in English, in prose as well as in poetry, that it is difficult to satisfy all personal predilections in a selection of this kind. Many favourites will be missed, but it is hoped there is a substantial mass of prose literature which will meet with general appreciation and approval.

Notes have been added for the benefit of students. They are not intended to replace the efforts which every young reader should make for understanding the passages placed into his hands, at least by constant references to the Dictionary, nor are they meant to be a substitute for

the work of the teacher and his spoken word of explanation in the class.

There are also *Hints to Teachers* in the appendix, containing suggestions of various kinds, including references to books which may be made available in the College Library. It is hoped that they will be found useful to teachers, particularly in the distant and outlying colleges which may not have the advantage of good libraries. All the information referred to in the *Hints* is not meant for being conveyed to the Intermediate student. Much of it is obviously for the teacher only and intended to improve the quality of work in our colleges, so that the Intermediate student may be better prepared for the work which lies before him in the higher classes.

In conclusion, the Editor wishes to convey his thanks to his son, Mr. P. V. Acharya, M.A., for his assistance in preparing the notes and seeing this volume through the press.

*Dated Ajmer, 2nd June, 1935.*

P. SESHADRI.



I  
ADVENTURES OF A SPELLING.

JOSEPH ADDISON

I WAS last night visited by a friend of mine, who has an inexhaustible fund of discourse, and never fails to entertain his company with a variety of thoughts and hints that are altogether new and uncommon. Whether it were in complaisance to my way of living, or his real opinion, he advanced the following paradox, "That it required much greater talents to fill up and become a retired life, than a life of business." Upon this occasion he rallied very agreeably the busy men of the age, who only valued themselves for being in motion, and passing through a series of trifling and insignificant actions. In the heat of his discourse, seeing a piece of money lying on my table, "I defy (says he) any of these active persons to produce half the adventures that this twelve-penny piece has been engaged in, were it possible for him to give us an account of his life."

My friend's talk made so odd an impression upon my mind, that soon after I was a-bed I fell insensibly into a most unaccountable reverie, that had neither moral

nor design in it. and cannot be so properly called a dream as a delirium.

Methought the shilling that lay upon the table reared itself upon its edge. and turning the face towards me. opened its mouth. and in a soft silver sound. gave me the following account of his life and adventures:

"I was born (says he) on the side of a mountain, near a little village of Peru. and made a voyage to England in an ingot. under the convoy of Sir Francis Drake. I was, soon after my arrival. taken out of my Indian habit. refined. naturalized. and put into the British mode. with the face of Queen Elizabeth on one side. and the arms of the country on the other. Being thus equipped. I found in me a wonderful inclination to ramble. and visit all parts of the new world into which I was brought. The people very much favoured my natural disposition. and shifted me so fast from hand to hand. that before I was five years old. I had travelled into almost every corner of the nation. But in the beginning of my sixth year. to my unspeakable grief, I fell into the hands of a miserable old fellow, who clapped me into an iron chest, where I found five hundred more of my own quality who lay under the same confinement. The only relief we had. was to be taken out

and counted over in the fresh air every morning and evening. After an imprisonment of several years, we heard somebody knocking at our chest, and breaking it open with a hammer. This we found was the old man's heir, who, as his father lay a-dying, was so good as to come to our release: he separated us that very day. What was the fate of my companions I know not: as for myself, I was sent to the apothecary's shop for a pint of sack. The apothecary gave me to an herb-woman, the herb-woman to a butcher, the butcher to a brewer, and the brewer to his wife, who made a present of me to a noneconformist preacher. After this manner I made my way merrily through the world; for, as I told you before, we shillings love nothing so much as travelling. I sometimes fetched in a shoulder of mutton, sometimes a play-book, and often had the satisfaction to treat a Templar at a twelvepenny ordinary, or carry him, with three friends, to Westminster Hall.

"In the midst of this pleasant progress which I made from place to place, I was arrested by a superstitious old woman, who shut me up in a greasy purse, in pursuance of a foolish saying, 'That while she kept a Queen Elizabeth's shilling about her, she should never be without money.' I continued here a close prisoner

for many months, till at last I was exchanged for eight and forty farthings.

“ I thus rambled from pocket to pocket till the beginning of the civil wars, when, to my shame be it spoken, I was employed in raising soldiers against the king: for being of a very tempting breadth, a sergeant made use of me to inveigle country fellows, and list them in the service of the parliament.

“ As soon as he had made one man sure, his way was to oblige him to take a shilling of a more homely figure, and then practise the same trick upon another. Thus I continued doing great mischief to the crown: till my officer, chancing one morning to walk abroad earlier than ordinary, sacrificed me to his pleasures, and made use of me to bestow me on a milk-maid. This wench bent me, and gave me to her sweetheart, applying more properly than she intended the usual form of, ‘To my love and from my love.’ This ungenerous gallant marrying her within a few days after, pawned me for a dram of brandy, and drinking me out next day, I was beaten flat with a hammer, and again set a-running.

“ After many adventures, which it would be tedious to relate, I was sent to a young spendthrift, in company with the will of his deceased father. The young fellow,

who I found was very extravagant, gave great demonstrations of joy at the receiving of the will: but opening it, he found himself disinherited and cut off from the possession of a fair estate. by virtue of my being made a present to him. This put him into such a passion, that after having taken me in his hand, and cursed me, he squirmed me away from him as far as he could fling me. I chanced to light in an unfrequented place under a dead wall, where I lay undiscovered and useless, during the usurpation of Oliver Cromwell.

“About a year after the king’s return, a poor cavalier that was walking there about dinner-time, fortunately cast his eye upon me, and, to the great joy of us both, carried me to a cook’s shop, where he dined upon me, and drank the king’s health. When I came again into the world, I found that I had been happier in my retirement than I thought, having probably, by that means, escaped wearing a monstrous pair of breeches.

“Being now of great credit and antiquity, I was rather looked upon as a medal than an ordinary coin: for which reason a gamester laid hold of me, and converted me to a counter, having got together some dozens of us for that use. We led a melancholy life in his possession, being busy at those hours wherein current

coin is at rest. and partaking the fate of our master. being in a few moments valued at a crown, a pound. or a sixpence. according to the situation in which the fortune of the cards placed us. I had at length the good luck to see my master break. by which means I was again sent abroad under my primitive denomination of a shilling.

“I shall pass over many other accidents of less moment. and hasten to that fatal catastrophe. when I fell into the hands of an artist. who conveyed me underground. and with an unmerciful pair of shears. cut off my titles. clipped my brims. retrenched my shape. rubbed me to my inmost ring. and. in short. so spoiled and pillaged me. that he did not leave me worth a groat. You may think what a confusion I was in. to see myself thus curtailed and disfigured. I should have been ashamed to have shown my head. had not all my old acquaintance been reduced to the same shameful figure. excepting some few that were punched through the belly. In the midst of this general calamity. when everybody thought our misfortune irretrievable. and our case desperate. we were thrown into the furnace together. and (as it often happens with cities rising out of a fire) appeared with greater beauty and lustre than we could

ever boast of before. What has happened to me since this change of sex which you now see, I shall take some other opportunity to relate. In the meantime, I shall only repeat two adventures, as being very extraordinary, and neither of them having ever happened to me above once in my life. The first was, my being in a poet's

of my appearance, that it gave occasion to the finest burlesque poem in the British language, entitled from me, 'The Splendid Shilling.' The second adventure, which I must not omit, happened to me in the year 1703, when I was given away in charity to a blind man: but indeed this was by a mistake, the person who gave me having heedlessly thrown me into the hat among a penny-worth of farthings."

—*The Tatler*

## II A DEATH-BED SCENE

SIR RICHARD STEELE

I WAS walking about my chamber this morning in a very gay humour. when I saw a coach stop at my door, and a youth about fifteen alighting out of it, whom I perceived to be the eldest son of my bosom friend that I gave some account of in my paper of the seventeenth of the last month. I felt a sensible pleasure rising in me at the sight of him. my acquaintance having begun with his father when he was just such a stripling, and about that very age. When he came up to me he took me by the hand. and burst out into tears. I was extremely moved. and immediately said. "Child. how does your father do?" He began to reply. "My mother—" but could not go on for weeping. I went down with him into the coach, and gathered out of him, "that his mother was then dying; and that, while the holy man was doing the last offices to her. he had taken that time to come and call me to his father. who, he said, would certainly break his heart. if I did not go and comfort



him." The child's discretion in coming to me of his own head, and the tenderness he showed for his parents, would have quite overpowered me, had I not resolved to fortify myself for the seasonable performances of those duties which I owed to my friend. As we were going, I could not but reflect upon the character of that excellent woman, and the greatness of his grief for the loss of one who has ever been the support to him under all other afflictions. How, thought I, will he be able to bear the hour of her death, that could not, when I was lately with him, speak of a sickness, which was then past, without sorrow? We were now got pretty far into Westminster, and arrived at my friend's house. At the door of it I met Favonius, not without a secret satisfaction to find he had been there. I had formerly conversed with him at this house; and as he abounds with that sort of virtue and knowledge which makes religion beautiful, and never leads the conversation into the violence and rage of party-disputes, I listened to him with great pleasure. Our discourse chanced to be upon the subject of death, which he treated with such a strength of reason, and greatness of soul, that, instead of being terrible, it appeared to a mind rightly cultivated, altogether to be contemned, or rather to be desired. As I met him at the

door, I saw in his face a certain glowing of grief and humanity. heightened with an air of fortitude and resolution. which. as I afterwards found. had such an irresistible force. as to suspend the pains of the dying and the lamentation of the nearest friends who attended her. I went up directly to the room where she lay, and was met at the entrance by my friend. who, notwithstanding his thoughts had been composed a little before, at the sight of me turned away his face and wept. The little family of children renewed the expressions of their sorrow according to their several ages and degrees of understanding. The eldest daughter was in tears. busied in attendance upon her mother: others were kneeling about the bedside: and what troubled me most. was. to see a little boy. who was too young to know the reason. weeping only because his sisters did. The only one in the room who seemed resigned and comforted was the dying person. At my approach to the bedside she told me. with a low broken voice. "This is kindly done—take care of your friend—do not go from him." She had before taken leave of her husband and children. in a manner proper for so solemn a parting. and with a gracefulness peculiar to a woman of her character. My heart was torn in pieces. to see the husband on one side.

suppressing and keeping down the swellings of his grief. for fear of disturbing her in her last moments; and the wife. even at that time. concealing the pains she endured. for fear of increasing his affliction. She kept her eyes upon him for some moments after she grew speechless. and soon after closed them for ever. In the moment of her departure. my friend. who had thus far commanded himself. gave a deep groan. and fell into a swoon by her bedside. The distraction of the children. who thought they saw both their parents expiring together. and now lying dead before them. would have melted the hardest heart; but they soon perceived their father recover whom I helped to remove into another room. with a resolution to accompany him until the first pangs of his affliction were abated. I knew consolation would now be impertinent. and therefore contented myself to sit by him. and condole with him in silence. For I shall here use the method of an ancient author. who in one of his epistles. relating the virtues and death of Macrinus's wife. expresses himself thus:

“I shall suspend my advice to this best of friends until he is made capable of receiving it by those three great remedies. the necessity of submission. length of time. and satiety of grief.”

In the meantime. I cannot but consider. with much commiseration. the melancholy state of one who has had such a part of himself torn from him. and which he misses in every circumstance of life. His condition is like that of one who has lately lost his right arm, and is every moment offering to help himself with it. He does not appear to himself the same person in his house. at his table. in company. or in retirement; and loses the relish of all the pleasures and diversions that were before entertaining to him by her participation of them. The most agreeable objects recall the sorrow for her with whom he used to enjoy them. This additional satisfaction. from the taste of pleasures in the society of one we love. is admirably described by Milton. who represents Eve. though in Paradise itself, no further pleased with the beautiful objects around her, than as she sees them in company with Adam. in that passage so inexpressibly charming:

“ With thee conversing. I forget all time;  
All seasons. and their change; all please alike.  
Sweet is the breath of morn. her rising sweet  
With charm of earliest birds: pleasant the sun.  
When first on this delightful land he spreads  
His orient beams. on herb. tree. fruit. and flower,

Glistening with dew; fragrant the fertile earth  
After soft showers; and sweet the coming on  
Of grateful evening mild; the silent night,  
With this her solemn bird, and this fair moon,  
And these the gems of heaven, her starry train.  
But neither breath of morn when she ascends  
With charm of earliest birds; nor rising sun  
On this delightful land; nor herb, fruit, flower.  
Glistening with dew; nor fragrance after  
showers:

Nor grateful evening mild; nor silent night.  
With this her solemn bird, nor walk by moon.  
Or glittering star-light, without thee is sweet."

The variety of images in this passage is infinitely pleasing, and the recapitulation of each particular image, with a little varying of the expression, makes one of the finest turns of words that I have ever seen; which I rather mention because Mr. Dryden has said, in his preface to Juvenal, that he could meet with no turn of words in Milton.

It may be further observed, that though the sweetness of these verses has something in it of a pastoral, yet it exceeds the ordinary kind, as much as the scene of it is above an ordinary field or meadow. I might here,

since I am accidentally led into this subject. show several passages in Milton that have as excellent turns of this nature as any of our English poets whatsoever; but shall only mention that which follows. in which he describes the fallen angels engaged in the intricate disputes of predestination. free-will. and fore-knowledge. and. to humour the perplexity. makes a kind of labyrinth in the very words that describe it.

“Others apart sat on a hill retir’d.

In thoughts more elevate. and reason’d high  
Of Providence. fore-knowledge. will. and fate.  
Fix’d fate. free-will. fore-knowledge absolute.  
And found no end. in wandering mazes lost.”

—*The Tatler*

### III JONATHAN WILD

HENRY FIELDING

WE will now endeavour to draw the character of this Great Man. and by bringing together those several features as it were of his mind, which lie scattered up and down in this history, to present our readers with a perfect picture of Greatness.

Jonathan Wild had every qualification necessary to form a great man. As his most powerful and predominant passion was ambition. so nature had, with consummate propriety, adapted all his faculties to the attaining of those glorious ends to which this passion directed him. He was extremely ingenious in inventing designs; artful in contriving the means to accomplish his purposes, and resolute in executing them: For, as the most exquisite cunning, and most undaunted boldness qualified him for any undertaking. so was he not restrained by any of those weaknesses which disappoint the views of mean and vulgar souls. and which are comprehended in one general term of honesty, which is a corruption of Honesty, a word derived from what the

Greeks call an Ass. He was entirely free from those low vices of modesty and good-nature. which, as he said. implied a total negation of human Greatness, and were the only qualities which absolutely rendered a man incapable of making a considerable figure in the world. His lust was inferior only to his ambition; but. as for what simple people call love, he knew not what it was. His avarice was immense: but it was of the rapacious not of the tenacious kind; his rapaciousness was indeed so violent. that nothing ever contented him but the whole: for. however considerable the share was, which his co-adjutors allowed him of a booty, he was restless in inventing means to make himself master of the smallest pittance reserved by them. He said, laws were made for the use of *Prigs* only, and to secure their property; they were never therefore more perverted, than when their edge was turned against these; but that this generally happened through their want of sufficient dexterity. The character which he most valued himself upon. and which he principally honoured in others, was that of hypocrisy. His opinion was, that no 'one could carry *Priggism* very far without it; for which reason, he said, there was little Greatness to be expected in a man who acknowledged his vices; but always much to



he hoped from him. who professed great virtues; wherefore, though he would always shun the person whom he discovered guilty of a good action. yet he was never deterred by a good character. which was more commonly the effect of profession than of action; for which reason, he himself was always very liberal of honest professions. and had as much virtue and goodness in his mouth as a saint; never in the least scrupling to swear by his honour. even to those who knew him the best; nay, tho' he held good-nature and modesty in the highest contempt. he constantly practised the affectation of both. and recommended this to others. whose welfare. on his own account. he wished well too. He laid down several maxims. as the certain methods of attaining Greatness. to which. in his own pursuit of it. he constantly adhered. As—

(1) Never to do more mischief to another. than was necessary to the effecting his purpose: for that mischief was too precious a thing to be thrown away.

(2) To know no distinction of men from affection; but to sacrifice all with equal readiness to his interest.

(3) Never to communicate more of an affair than was necessary, to the person who was to execute it.

(4) Not to trust him. who hath deceived you, nor who knows he hath been deceived by you.

(5) To forgive no enemy; but to be cautious and often dilatory in revenge.

(6) To shun poverty and distress. and to ally himself as close as possible to power and riches.

(7) To maintain a constant gravity in his countenance and behaviour. and to affect wisdom on all occasions.

(8) To foment eternal jealousies in his gang. one of another.

(9) Never to reward anyone equal to his merit; but always to insinuate that the reward was above it.

(10) That all men were knaves or fools. and much the greater number a composition of both.

(11) That a good name, like money, must be parted with. or at least greatly risked. in order to bring the owner any advantage.

(12) That virtues. like precious stones. were easily counterfeited; that the counterfeits in both cases adorned the wearer equally. and that very few had knowledge or discernment sufficient to distinguish the counterfeit jewel from the real.

(13) That many men were undone by not going deep enough in roguery; as in gaming any man may be a loser who doth not play the whole game.

(14) Thāt men proclaim their own virtues. as shopkeepers expose their goods. in order to profit by them.

(15) That the heart was the proper seat of hatred. and the countenance of affection and friendship.

He had many more of the same kind. all equally good with these. and which were after his decease found in his study. as the twelve excellent and ecelebrated rules were in that of King Charles the First; for he never promulgated them in his life-time. not having them constantly in his mouth. as some grave persons have the rules of virtue and morality. without paying the least regard to them in their actions: whereas our hero. by a constant and steady adherence to his rules in conforming everything he did to them. acquired at length a settled habit of walking by them. till at last he was in no danger of inadvertently going out of the way; and by these means he arrived at that degree of Greatness. which few have equalled: none, we may say. have exceeded: for, tho' it must be allowed that there have been some few heroes. who have done greater mischiefs to

mankind. such as those who have betrayed the liberty of their country to others. or have undermined and overpowered it themselves; or conquerors who have impoverished. pillaged. sacked. burned. and destroyed the countries and cities of their fellow creatures, from no other provocation than that of glory; *i.e.* as the tragic poet calls it.

—*a privilege to kill.*

*A strong temptation to do bravely ill;*

yet. if we consider it in the light wherein actions are placed in this line.

*Laetius est. quoties magno tibi constat honestum;* when we see our hero. without the least assistance or pretence, setting himself at the head of a gang. which he had not any shadow of right to govern; if we view him maintaining absolute power. and exercising tyranny over a lawless crew. contrary to all law. but that of his own will; if we consider him setting up an open trade publicly. in defiance. not only of the laws of his country. but of the commonsense of his countrymen; if we see him first contriving the robbery of others and again the defrauding the very robbers of that booty, which they had ventured their necks to acquire. and which without any hazard they might have retained: Here sure he must

appear admirable, and we may challenge not only the truth of history, but almost the latitude of fiction to equal his glory.

Nor had he any of those flaws in his character, which, though they have been commended by weak writers, have (as I hinted in the beginning of this history) by the judicious reader been censured and despised. Such was the clemency of Alexander and Cæsar, which nature hath as grossly erred in giving them, as a painter would, who should dress a peasant in robes of state, or give the nose, or any other feature of a Venus, to a satyr. What had the destroyers of mankind, that glorious pair, one of whom came into the world to usurp the dominion, and abolish the constitution of his own country: the other to conquer, enslave, and rule over the whole world, at least as much as was well known to him, and the shortness of his life would give him leave to visit; what had, I say, such as these to do with clemency? Who cannot see the absurdity and contradiction of mixing such an ingredient with those noble and great qualities I have before mentioned? Now in Wild, everything was truly Great, almost without alloy, as his imperfections (for surely some small ones he had) were only such as served to denominate him a human creature, of which

kind none ever arrived at consummate excellence: but surely his whole behaviour to his friend Heartfree is a convincing proof, that the true iron or steel Greatness of his heart was not debased by any softer metal. Indeed while Greatness consists in power. pride. insolence, and doing mischief to mankind:—to speak out.—while a Great man and a Great rogue are synonymous terms. so long shall Wild stand unrivalled on the pinnacle of Greatness. Nor must we omit here. as the finishing of his character. what indeed ought to be remembered on his tomb or his statue, the conformity abovementioned of his death to his life: and that Jonathan Wild the Great, after all his mighty exploits. was what so few Great men can accomplish—hanged by the neck. till he was dead.

—*Life of Jonathan Wild the Great*

#### IV

### THE MULTIPLICATION OF BOOKS

DR. SAMUEL JOHNSON

ONE of the peculiarities which distinguish the present age is the multiplication of books. Every day brings new advertisements of literary undertakings, and we are flattered with repeated promises of growing wise on easier terms than our progenitors.

How much either happiness or knowledge is advanced by this multitude of authors, it is not very easy to decide. He that teaches us anything which we knew not before is undoubtedly to be revered as a master. He that conveys knowledge by more pleasing ways may very properly be loved as a benefactor: and he that supplies life with innocent amusement will be certainly caressed as a pleasing companion. But few of those who fill the world with books have any pretensions to the hope either of pleasing or instructing. They have often no other task than to lay two books before them, out of which they compile a third, without any new materials of their own, and with very little application of judgment to those which former authors have supplied.

That all compilations are useless I do not assert. Particles of science are often very widely scattered. Writers of extensive comprehension have incidental remarks upon topics very remote from the principal subject, which are often more valuable than formal treatises, and which yet are not known because they are not promised in the title. He that collects those under proper heads is very laudably employed. for, though he exerts no great abilities in the work, he facilitates the progress of others, and, by making that easy of attainment which is already written, may give some mind, more vigorous or more adventurous than his own, leisure for new thoughts and original designs.

But the collections poured lately from the press have been seldom made at any great expense of time or inquiry, and therefore only serve to distract choice without supplying any real want. It is observed that "a corrupt society has many laws." and I know not whether it is not equally true that an ignorant age has many books. When the treasures of ancient knowledge lie unexamined, and original authors are neglected and forgotten, compilers and plagiaries are encouraged, who give us again what we had before, and grow great by setting before us what our own sloth had hidden from our view.



Yet are not even these writers to be indiscriminately censured and rejected. Truth, like beauty, varies its fashions, and is best recommended by different dresses to different minds; and he that recalls the attention of mankind to any part of learning which time has left behind it, may be truly said to advance the literature of his own age. As the manners of nations vary, new topics of persuasion become necessary, and new combinations of imagery are produced; and he that can accommodate himself to the reigning taste may always have readers who perhaps would not have looked upon better performances. To exact of every man who writes that he should say something new would be to reduce authors to a small number; to oblige the most fertile genius to say only what is new would be to contract his volumes to a few pages. Yet surely there ought to be some bounds to repetition. Libraries ought no more to be heaped for ever with the same thoughts differently expressed than with the same books differently decorated.

The good or evil which these secondary writers produce is seldom of any long duration. As they owe their existence to change of fashion, they commonly disappear when a new fashion becomes prevalent. The authors that in any nation last from age to age are few, because

there are very few that have any other claim to notice than that they catch hold on present curiosity, and gratify some accidental desire. or produce some temporary convenience.

But, however the writers of the day may despair of future fame. they ought at least to forbear any present mischief. Though they cannot arrive at eminent heights of excellence. they might keep themselves harmless. They might take care to inform themselves before they attempt to inform others. and exert the little influence which they have for honest purposes. But such is the present state of our literature. that the ancient sage who thought "a great book a great evil" would now think the multitude of books a multitude of evils. He would consider a bulky writer who engrossed a year. and a swarm of pamphleteers who stole each an hour: as equal wasters of human life. and would make no other difference between them than between a beast of prey and a flight of locusts.

—*The Idler*

V  
OF AVARICE

DAVID HUME

It is easy to observe, that comic writers exaggerate every character, and draw their fop or coward with stronger features than are anywhere to be met with in nature. This moral kind of painting for the stage has been often compared to the painting for cupolas and ceilings, where the colours are overcharged. and every part is drawn excessively large. and beyond nature. The figures seem monstrous and disproportioned, when seen too nigh; but become natural and regular. when set at a distance, and placed in that point of view. in which they are intended to be surveyed. For a like reason, when characters are exhibited in theatrical representations, the want of reality removes, in a manner, the personages; and rendering them more cold and unentertaining, makes it necessary to compensate. by the force of colouring, what they want in substance. Thus we find in common life, that when a man once allows himself to depart from truth in his narrations. he never can keep within bounds of probability: but adds still some new

circumstance to render his stories more marvellous, and to satisfy his imagination. Two men in buckram suits became eleven to Sir John Falstaff, before the end of the story.

There is only one vice, which may be found in life with as strong features, and as high a colouring as need be employed by any satirist or comic poet; and that is Avarice. Every day we meet with men of immense fortunes, without heirs, and on the very brink of the grave, who refuse themselves the most common necessities of life, and go on heaping possessions on possessions under all the real pressures of the severest poverty. An old usurer, says the story, lying in his last agonies, was presented by the priest with the crucifix to worship. He opens his eyes a moment before he expires, considers the crucifix and cries, *These jewels are not true; I can only lend ten pistoles upon such a pledge.* This was probably the invention of some epigrammatist: and yet every one, from his own experience, may be able to recollect almost as strong instances of perseverance in avarice. It is commonly reported of a famous miser in this city, that finding himself near death, he sent for some of the magistrates and gave them a bill of one hundred pounds, payable after his decease, which sum

he intended should be disposed of in charitable uses; but scarce were they gone. when he orders them to be called back, and offers them ready money if they would abate five pounds of the sum. Another noted miser in the north. intending to defraud his heirs, and leave his fortune to the building of a hospital, protracted the drawing of his will from day to day; and it is thought, that if those interested in it had not paid for the drawing of it. he would have died intestate. In short, none of the most furious excesses of love and ambition are. in any respect. to be compared to the extremes of avarice.

The best excuse that can be made for avarice is. that it generally prevails in old men, or in men of cold tempers. where all the other affections are extinct: and the mind being incapable of remaining without some passion or pursuit. at last finds out his monstrously absurd one. which suits the coldness and inactivity of its temper. At the same time, it seems very extraordinary. that so frosty. spiritless a passion should be able to carry us further than all the warmth of youth and pleasure. But if we look more narrowly into the matter, we shall find, that this very circumstance renders the explication of the case more easy. When the temper is

warm and full of vigour. it naturally shoots out more ways than one. and produces inferior passions to counter balance. in some degree. its predominant inclination. It is impossible for a person of that temper. however bent on any pursuit. to be deprived of all sense of shame, or all regard to sentiments of mankind. His friends must have some influence over him: and other considerations are apt to have their weight. All this serves to restrain him within some bounds. But it is no wonder that the avaricious man. being. from the coldness of his temper. without regard to reputation. to friendship. or to pleasure. should be carried so far by his prevailing inclination. and should display his passion in such surprising instances.

Accordingly. we find no vice so irreclaimable as avarice; and though there scarcely has been a moralist or philosopher. from the beginning of the world to this day, who has not levelled a stroke at it. we hardly find a single instance of any person's being cured of it. For this reason. I am more apt to approve of those who attack it with wit and humour. than of those who treat it in a serious manner. There being so little hopes of doing good to the people infected with this vice, I would have the rest of mankind at least. diverted by our manner

of exposing it; as indeed there is no kind of diversion, of which they seem so willing to partake.

Among the fables of Monsieur de la Motte, there is one levelled against avarice, which seems to me more natural and easy than most of the fables of that ingenious author. A miser, says he, being dead, and fairly interred, came to the banks of the Styx, desiring to be ferried over along with the other ghosts. Charon demands his fare, and is surprised to see the miser, rather than pay it, throw himself into the river, and swim over to the other side, notwithstanding all the clamour and opposition that could be made to him. All hell was in an uproar; and each of the judges was meditating some punishment suitable to a crime of such dangerous consequences to the infernal revenues. Shall he be chained to the rock with Prometheus? or tremble below the precipice in company with the Danaïdes? or assist Sisyphus in rolling his stone? No, says Minos, none of these. We must invent some severer punishment. Let him be sent back to the earth, to see the use his heirs are making of his riches.

I hope it will not be interpreted as a design of setting myself in opposition to this celebrated author, if I proceed to deliver a fable of my own, which is

intended to expose the same vice of avarice. The hint of it was taken from these lines of Mr. Pope:

Damn'd to the mines, an equal fate betides

The slave that digs it, and the slave that hides.

Our old mother Earth once lodged an indictment against Avarice before the courts of heaven, for her wicked and malicious counsel and advice in tempting, inducing, persuading, and traitorously seducing the children of the plaintiff to commit the detestable crime of parricide upon her, and, mangling the body, ransack her very bowels for hidden treasure. The indictment was very long and verbose; but we must admit a great part of the repetitions and synonymous terms, not to tire our readers too much with our tale. Avarice, being called before Jupiter to answer to this charge, had not much to say in her own defence. The injury was clearly proved upon her. The fact, indeed, was notorious, and the injury had been frequently repeated. When, therefore, the plaintiff demanded justice, Jupiter very readily gave sentence in her favour; and his decree was to this purpose—That, since dame Avarice, the defendant, had thus grievously injured dame Earth, the plaintiff, she was hereby ordered to take that treasure, of which she had feloniously robbed the said plaintiff by



ransacking her bosom, and restore it back to her without diminution or retention. From this sentence it will follow, says Jupiter to the by-standers. that in all future ages, the retainers of Avarice shall bury and conceal their riches, and thereby restore to the earth what they take from her.

—*Essays*

## VI THE SAGACITY OF THE SPIDER

OLIVER GOLDSMITH

ANIMALS, in general, are sagacious in proportion as they cultivate society. The elephant and the beaver show the greatest signs of this when united; but when man intrudes into their communities, they lose all their spirit of industry, and testify but a very small share of that sagacity for which, when in a social state, they are so remarkable.

Among insects, the labours of the bee and the ant have employed the attention and admiration of the naturalist; but their whole sagacity is lost upon separation, and a single bee or ant seems destitute of every degree of industry, is the most stupid insect imaginable, languishes for a time in solitude, and soon dies.

Of all the solitary insects I have ever remarked, the spider is the most sagacious: and its actions, to me who have attentively considered them, seem almost to exceed belief. This insect is formed by nature for a state of war, not only upon other insects, but upon each other.

For this state nature seems perfectly well to have formed it. Its head and breast are covered with a strong natural coat of mail, which is impenetrable to the attempts of every other insect, and its belly is enveloped in a soft pliant skin, which eludes the sting even of a wasp. Its legs are terminated by strong claws, not unlike those of a lobster; and their vast length, like spears, serves to keep every assailant at a distance.

Not worse furnished for observation than for an attack or a defence, it has several eyes, large, transparent, and covered with a horny substance, which, however, does not impede its vision. Besides this, it is furnished with the forceps above the mouth, which serves to kill or secure the prey already caught in its claws or its net.

Such are the implements of war with which the body is immediately furnished: but its net to entangle the enemy seems what it chiefly trusts to, and what it takes most pains to render as complete as possible. Nature, by a curious provision, has furnished the body of this little creature with a glutinous liquid which it spins into thread, coarser or finer, according to the object it has in view. In order to fix its thread, when it begins to weave it emits a small drop of its liquid against the wall, which, hardening by degrees, serves to hold the thread very

firmly: then receding from the first point. as it recedes the thread lengthens: and. when the spider has come to the place where the other end of the thread should be fixed. gathering up with its claws the thread. which would otherwise be too slack. it is stretched tightly. and fixed in the same manner to the wall as before.

In this manner it spins and fixes several threads parallel to each other. which. so to speak. serve as the warp to the intended web. To form the woof. it spins in the same manner its thread. transversely fixing one end to the first thread that was spun. and which is always the strongest of the whole web. and the other to the wall. All these threads. being newly spun. are glutinous, and therefore stick to each other wherever they happen to touch: and in those parts of the web most exposed to be torn. our natural artist strengthens them. by doubling the threads sometimes sixfold.

Thus far naturalists have gone in the description of this animal; what follows is the result of my own observation upon that species of the insect called a house spider. I perceived. about four years ago. a large spider in one corner of my room. making its web; and. though the maid frequently levelled her fatal broom against the labours of the little animal. I had the good fortune then

to prevent its destruction; and, I may say, it more than paid me by the entertainment it afforded.

In three days the web was, with incredible diligence, completed; nor could I avoid thinking, that the insect seemed to exult in its new abode. It frequently traversed it round, examined the strength of every part of it, retired into its hole, and came out very frequently. The first enemy, however, it had to encounter. was another and a much larger spider. which, having no web of its own, and having probably exhausted all its stock in former labours of this kind, came to invade the property of its neighbour. Soon, then. a terrible encounter ensued, in which the invader seemed to have the victory, and the laborious spider was obliged to take refuge in its hole. Upon this I perceived the victor using every art to draw the enemy from his stronghold. He seemed to go off. but quickly returned; and when he found all arts in vain. began to destroy the new web without mercy. This brought on another battle, and. contrary to my expectations, the laborious spider became conqueror, and fairly killed his antagonist.

Now, then. in peaceable possession of what was justly its own. it waited three days with the utmost patience. repairing the breaches of its web, and taking

no sustenance that I could perceive. At last, however, a large blue fly fell into the snare, and struggled hard to get loose. The spider gave it leave to entangle itself as much as possible. but it seemed to be too strong for the cobweb. I must own I was greatly surprised when I saw the spider immediately sally out. and in less than a minute weave a new net round its captive. by which the motion of its wings was stopped: and when it was fairly hampered in this manner. it was seized and dragged into the hole.

In this manner it lived, in a precarious state; and nature seemed to have fitted it for such a life, for upon a single fly it subsisted for more than a week. I once put a wasp into the net; but when the spider came out in order to seize it as usual. upon perceiving what kind of an enemy it had to deal with. it instantly broke all the bands that held it fast. and contributed all that lay in its power to disengage so formidable an antagonist. When the wasp was at liberty. I expected the spider would have set about repairing the breaches that were made in its net: but those. it seems. were irreparable; wherefore the cobweb was now entirely forsaken, and a new one begun. which was completed in the usual time.

I had now a mind to try how many cobwebs a spider could furnish; wherefore I destroyed this. and the insect set about another. When I destroyed the other also, its whole stock seemed entirely exhausted. and it could spin no more. The arts it made use of to support itself, now deprived of its great means of subsistence. were indeed surprising. I have seen it roll up its legs like a ball, and lie motionless for hours together. but cautiously watching all the time: when a fly happened to approach sufficiently near, it would dart out all at once. and often seize its prey.

Of this life, however, it soon began to grow weary, and resolved to invade the possession of some other spider, since it could not make a web of its own. It formed an attack upon a neighbouring fortification with great vigour, and at first was as vigorously repulsed. Not daunted, however, with one defeat, in this manner it continued to lay siege to another's web for three days. and at length, having killed the defendant. actually took possession. When smaller flies happen to fall into the snare, the spider does not sally out at once, but very patiently waits till it is sure of them; for. upon his immediately approaching. the terror of his appearance might give the captive strength sufficient to get loose: the

manner then is to wait patiently till, by ineffectual and impotent struggles, the captive has wasted all his strength. and then he becomes a certain and easy conquest.

The insect I am now describing lived three years; every year it changed its skin, and got a new set of legs. I have sometimes plucked off a leg, which grew again in two or three days. At first it dreaded my approach to the web, but at last it became so familiar as to take a fly out of my hand; and upon my touching any part of the web, would immediately leave its hole, prepared either for a defence or an attack.

To complete this description, it may be observed, that the male spiders are much less than the female, and that the latter are oviparous. When they come to lay, they spread a part of their web under the eggs, and then roll them up carefully, as we roll up things in a cloth, and thus hatch them in their hole. If disturbed in their holes, they never attempt to escape without carrying this young brood in their forceps away with them, and thus frequently are sacrificed to their parental affection.

As soon as ever the young ones leave their artificial covering, they begin to spin, and almost sensibly seem to grow bigger. If they have the good fortune, when even but a day old, to catch a fly, they fall to with good



appetites; but they live sometimes three or four days without any sort of sustenance. and yet still continue to grow larger, so as every day to double their former size. As they grow old, however, they do not still continue to increase, but their legs only continue to grow longer: and when a spider becomes entirely stiff with age, and unable to seize its prey, it dies at length of hunger.

—*The Bee*

## VII ON CONVERSATION

WILLIAM COWPER

IN the comedy of the *Frenchman in London*, which we were told was acted at Paris with universal applause for several nights together. there is a character of a rough Englishman, who is represented as quite unskilled in the graces of conversation: and his dialogue consists almost entirely of a repetition of the common salutation of "how do you do?" Our nation has, indeed, been generally supposed to be of a sullen and uncommunicative disposition; while, on the other hand, the loquacious French have been allowed to possess the art of conversing beyond all other people. The Englishman requires to be wound up frequently, and stops as soon as he is down; but the Frenchman runs on in a continual alarum. Yet it must be acknowledged that as the English consist of very different humours, their manner of discourse admits of great variety: but the whole French nation converse alike; and there is no difference in their address between a marquis and a *valet de chambre*. We may frequently see a couple of French barbers accosting

each other in the street. and paying their compliments with the same volubility of speech. the same grimace and action, as two courtiers on the Tuilleries.

I shall not attempt to lay down any particular rules for conversation. but rather point out such faults in discourse and behaviour as render the company of half mankind rather tedious than amusing. It is in vain. indeed, to look for conversation where we might expect to find it in the greatest perfection. among persons of fashion; there it is almost annihilated by universal card-playing: insomuch that I have heard it given as a reason why it is impossible for our present writers to succeed in the dialogue of genteel comedy. that our people of quality scarce ever meet but to game. All their discourse turns upon the odd trick and the four honours: and it is no less a maxim with the votaries of whist than with those of Bacchus, that talking spoils company.

Everyone endeavours to make himself as agreeable to society as he can; but it often happens that those who most aim at shining in conversation overshoot their mark. Though a man succeeds, he should not (as is frequently the case) engross the whole talk to himself; for that destroys the very essence of conversation. which is talking together. We should try to keep up conversation

like a ball bandied to and fro from one to the other, rather than seize it all to ourselves, and drive it before us like a football. We should likewise be cautious to adapt the matter of our discourse to our company, and not talk Greek before ladies, or of the last new furbelow to a meeting of country justices.

But nothing throws a more ridiculous air over our whole conversation than certain peculiarities easily acquired, but very difficultly conquered and discarded. In order to display these absurdities in a truer light, it is my present purpose to enumerate such of them as are most commonly to be met with: and first to take notice of those buffoons in society, the Attitudinarians and Facemakers. These accompany every word with a peculiar grimace or gesture; they assent with a shrug, and contradict with a twisting of the neck; are angry by a wry mouth, and pleased in a caper or a minuet step. They may be considered as speaking harlequins; and their rules of eloquence are taken from the posture-master. These should be condemned to converse only in dumb show with their own persons in the looking-glass: as well as the Smirkers and Smilers, who so prettily set off their faces, together with their words, by a *je-ne-sais-quoi* between a grim and a dimple. With these we

may likewise rank the affected tribe of mimics, who are constantly taking off the peculiar tone of voice or gesture of their acquaintance, though they are such wretched imitators, that (like bad painters) they are frequently forced to write the name under the picture before we can discover any likeness.

Next to these whose elocution is absorbed in action, and who converse chiefly with their arms and legs, we may consider the Professed Speakers. And first, the Emphatical, who squeeze, and press, and ram down every syllable with excessive vehemence and energy. These orators are remarkable for their distinct elocution and force of expression: they dwell on the important particles *of* and *the*, and the significant conjunction *and*, which they seem to hawk up, with much difficulty, out of their own throats, and to cram them, with no less pain, into the ears of their auditors. These should be suffered only to syringe (as it were) the ears of a deaf man, through a hearing-trumpet: though I must confess that I am equally offended with the Whisperers or Low-speakers, who seem to fancy all their acquaintance deaf, and come up so close to you, that they may be said to measure noses with you, and frequently overcome you with the full exhalations of a stinking breath. I would

have these oracular gentry obliged to speak at a distance through a speaking-trumpet, or apply their lips to the walls of a whispering-gallery. The Wits, who will not condescend to utter anything but a *bon mot*, and the Whistlers or Tune-hummers. who never articulate at all. may be joined very agreeably together in concert; and to these tinkling cymbals I would also add the sounding brass; the Bawler. who inquires after your health with the bellowing of a town-crier.

The Tatlers. whose pliable pipes are admirably adapted to the "soft parts of conversation," and sweetly "prattling out of fashion." make very pretty music from a beautiful face and a female tongue; but from a rough manly voice and coarse features mere nonsense is as harsh and dissonant as a jig from a hurdy-gurdy. The Swearers I have spoken of in a former paper; but the Half-Swearers. who split, and mince, and fritter their oaths into gad's bud, ad's fish, and demme, the Gothic Humbuggers. and those who nickname God's creatures, and call a man a cabbage, a crab, a queer cub, an odd fish. and an unaccountable muskin. should never come into company without an interpreter. But I will not tire my reader's patience by pointing out all the pests of conversation; nor dwell particularly on the Sensibles, who

pronounce dogmatically on the most trivial points, and speak in sentences; the Wonderers, who are always wondering what o'clock it is, or wondering whether it will rain or no, or wondering when the moon changes; the Phraseologists, who explain a thing by all that, or enter into particulars, with this and that and t'other: and lastly, the Silent Men, who seem afraid of opening their mouths lest they should catch cold, and literally observe the precept of the Gospel, by letting their conversation be only yea yea, and nay nay.

The rational intercourse kept up by conversation is one of our principal distinctions from brutes. We should therefore endeavour to turn this peculiar talent to our advantage, and consider the organs of speech as the instruments of understanding: we should be very careful not to use them as the weapons of vice, or tools of folly, and do our utmost to unlearn any trivial or ridiculous habits, which tend to lessen the value of such an inestimable prerogative. It is, indeed, imagined by some philosophers, that even birds and beasts (though without the power of articulation) perfectly understand one another by the sounds they utter; and that dogs, cats, etc., have each a particular language to themselves, like different nations. Thus it may be supposed that the

nightingales of Italy have as fine an ear for their own native woodnotes as any signor or signora for an Italian air: that the boars of Westphalia gruntle as expressively through the nose as the inhabitants in high German: and that the frogs in the dykes of Holland croak as intelligibly as the natives jabber their Low-Dutch. However this may be, we may consider those whose tongues hardly seem to be under the influence of reason, and do not keep up the proper conversation of human creatures, as imitating the language of different animals. Thus, for instance, the affinity between Chatterers and Monkeys, and Praters and Parrots, is too obvious not to occur at once: Grunters and Growlers may be justly compared to Hogs: Snarlers are Curs that continually show their teeth, but never bite: and the Spitfire passionate are a sort of wild cats that will not bear stroking, but will purr when they are pleased. Complainers are Screech-Owls: and Story-tellers, always repeating the same dull note, are Cuckoos. Poets that prick up their ears at their own hideous braying are no better than Asses. Critics in general are venomous Serpents that delight in hissing, and some of them who have got by heart a few technical terms without knowing their meaning are no other than Magpies. I myself, who have crowed to the



whole town for near three years past. may perhaps put my readers in mind of a Dunghill Cock; but as I must acquaint them. that they will hear the last of me on this day fortnight. I hope they will then consider me as a Swan, who is supposed to sing sweetly at his dying moments.

—*The Connoisseur*

## VIII A MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT

EDMUND BURKE

CERTAINLY, gentlemen. it ought to be the happiness and glory of a representative to live in the strictest union, the closest correspondence, and the most unreserved communication with his constituents. Their wishes ought to have great weight with him: their opinion high respect: their business unremitting attention. It is his duty to sacrifice his repose, his pleasures, his satisfactions, to theirs: and above all, ever, and in all cases, to prefer their interest to his own. But his unbiassed opinion, his mature judgment, his enlightened conscience, he ought not to sacrifice to you: to any man, or to any set of men living. These he does not derive from your pleasure: no, nor from the law and the constitution. They are a trust from Providence, for the abuse of which he is deeply answerable. Your representative owes you, not his industry only, but his judgment: and he betrays, instead of serving you, if he sacrifices it to your opinion.

My worthy colleague says, his will ought to be subservient to yours. If that be all, the thing is innocent.

If government were a matter of will upon any side, yours, without question, ought to be superior. But government and legislation are matters of reason and judgment, and not of inclination; and what sort of reason is that, in which the determination precedes the discussion; in which one set of men deliberate and another decide; and where those who form the conclusion are perhaps three hundred miles distant from those who hear the argument?

To deliver an opinion is the right of all men; that of constituents is a weighty and respectable opinion, which a representative ought always to rejoice to hear; and which he ought always most seriously to consider. But *authoritative* instructions, *mandates* issued, which the member is bound blindly and implicitly to obey, to vote, and to argue for, though contrary to the clearest conviction of his judgment and conscience,—these are things utterly unknown to the laws of this land, and which arise from a fundamental mistake of the whole order and tenor of our constitution.

Parliament is not a *congress* of ambassadors from different and hostile interests; which interests each must maintain, as an agent and advocate, against other agents and advocates; but parliament is a *deliberative* assembly

of *one* nation, with *one* interest. that of the whole; where, not local purposes. not local prejudices. ought to guide. but the general good. resulting from the general reason of the whole. You choose a member indeed; but when you have chosen him. he is not member of Bristol. but he is a member of *parliament*. If the local constituent should have an interest. or should form a hasty opinion. evidently opposite to the real good of the rest of the community. the member for that place ought to be as far. as any other. from any endeavour to give it effect. I beg pardon for saying so much on this subject. I have been unwillingly drawn into it: but I shall ever use a respectful frankness of communication with you. Your faithful friend. your devoted servant. I shall be to the end of my life: a flatterer you do not wish for. On this point of instructions. however. I think it scarcely possible we ever can have any sort of difference. Perhaps I may give you too much. rather than too little trouble.

From the first hour I was encouraged to court your favour. to *this happy day of obtaining it*. I have never promised you anything but humble and persevering endeavours to do my duty. The weight of that duty. I confess. makes me tremble: and whoever well considers what it is. of all things in the world. will fly from what

has the least likeness to a positive and precipitate engagement. To be a good member of parliament, is, let me tell you, no easy task; especially at this time, when there is so strong a disposition to run into the perilous extremes of servile compliance or wild popularity. To unite circumspection with vigour, is absolutely necessary; but it is extremely difficult. We are now members for a rich commercial *city*; this city, however, is but a part of a rich commercial *nation*, the interests of which are various, multiform, and intricate. We are members for that great nation, which, however, is itself but part of a great *empire*, extended by our virtue and our fortune to the farthest limits of the east and of the west. All these widespread interests must be considered: must be compared; must be reconciled if possible. We are members for a *free* country; and surely we all know, that the machine of a free constitution is no simple thing; but as intricate and as delicate as it is valuable. We are members in a great and ancient *monarchy*; and we must preserve religiously the true legal rights of the sovereign, which form the keystone that binds together the noble and well-constructed arch of our empire and our constitution. A constitution made up of balanced powers must ever be a critical thing. As such I mean to touch that

part of it which comes within my reach. I know my inability, and I wish for support from every quarter. In particular I shall aim at the friendship, and shall cultivate the best correspondence, of the worthy colleague you have given me.

I trouble you no farther than once more to thank you all! you, gentlemen, for your favours; the candidates, for their temperate and polite behaviour; and the sheriffs, for a conduct which may give a model for all who are in public stations.

—*Speech to the Electors of Bristol*

## IX CONSTANTINOPLE

EDWARD GIBBON

IF we survey Byzantium in the extent which it acquired with the august name of Constantinople, the figure of the imperial city may be represented under that of an unequal triangle. The obtuse point, which advances towards the east and the shores of Asia, meets and repels the waves of the Thracian Bosphorus. The northern side of the city is bounded by the harbour; and the southern is washed by the Propontis, or Sea of Marmora. The basis of the triangle is opposed to the West, and terminates the continent of Europe. But the admirable form and division of the circumjacent land and water cannot, without a more ample explanation, be clearly or sufficiently understood.

The winding channel through which the waters of the Euxine flow with a rapid and incessant course towards the Mediterranean, received the appellation of Bosphorus, a name not less celebrated in the history, than in the fables, of antiquity. A crowd of temples and of votive altars, profusely scattered along its steep and woody

banks, attested the unskilfulness, the terrors, and the devotion of the Grecian navigators. who, after the example of the Argonauts. explored the dangers of the inhospitable Euxine. On these banks tradition long preserved the memory of the palæe of Phineus. infested by the obscene harpies; and of the sylvan reign of Amycus. who defied the son of Leda to the combat of the Cestus. The straits of the Bosphorus are terminated by the Cyanean rocks. which. according to the description of the poets. had once floated on the face of the waters: and were destined by the Gods to protect the entrance of the Euxine against the eye of profane curiosity. From the Cyanean rocks to the point and harbour of Byzantium. the winding length of the Bosphorus extends about sixteen miles, and its most ordinary breadth may be computed at about one mile and a half. The *new* castles of Europe and Asia are constructed. on either continent. upon the foundations of two celebrated temples, of Serapis and of Jupiter Urius. The *old* castles. a work of the Greek emperors, command the narrowest part of the channel, in a place where the opposite banks advance within five hundred paces of each other. These fortresses were restored and strengthened by Mahomet the Second. when he meditated



the siege of Constantinople: but the Turkish conqueror was most probably ignorant. that near two thousand years before his reign, Darius had chosen the same situation to connect the two continents by a bridge of boats. At a small distance from the old castles we discover the little town of Chrysopolis, or Scutari, which may almost be considered as the Asiatic suburb of Constantinople. The Bosphorus, as it begins to open into the Propontis, passes between Byzantium and Chalcedon. The latter of those cities was built by the Greeks, a few years before the former; and the blindness of its founders, who overlooked the superior advantages of the opposite coast, has been stigmatized by a proverbial expression of contempt.

The harbour of Constantinople, which may be considered as an arm of the Bosphorus, obtained in a very remote period, the denomination of the *Golden Horn*. The curve which it describes might be compared to the horn of a stag, or, as it should seem, with more propriety, to that of an ox. The epithet of *golden* was expressive of the riches which every wind wafted from the most distant countries into the secure and capacious port of Constantinople. The river Lyens, formed by the conflux of two little streams, pours into the harbour a perpetual

supply of fresh water, which serves to cleanse the bottom, and to invite the periodical shoals of fish to seek their retreat in that convenient recess. As the vicissitudes of tides are scarcely felt in those seas, the constant depth of the harbour allows goods to be landed on the quays without the assistance of boats; and it has been observed, that in many places the largest vessels may rest their prows against the houses, while their sterns are floating in the water. From the mouth of the Lycus to that of the harbour, this arm of the Bosphorus is more than seven miles in length. The entrance is about five hundred yards broad, and a strong chain could be occasionally drawn across it to guard the port and city from the attack of a hostile Navy.

Between the Bosphorus and the Hellespont, the shores of Europe and Asia receding on either side inclose the Sea of Marmora, which was known to the ancients by the denomination of Propontis. The navigation from the issue of the Bosphorus to the entrance of the Hellespont is about one hundred and twenty miles. Those who steer their westward course through the middle of the Propontis, may at once descry the highlands of Thrace and Bithynia, and never lose sight of the lofty summit of Mount Olympus, covered with eternal snows. They leave

on the left a deep gulf, at the bottom of which Nicomedia was seated, the imperial residence of Diocletian; and they pass the small islands of Cyzius and Proconnesus before they cast anchor at Gallipoli; where the sea, which separates Asia from Europe, is again contracted into a narrow channel.

The geographers who, with the most skilful accuracy, have surveyed the form and extent of the Hellespont, assign about sixty miles for the winding course, and about three miles for the ordinary breadth of those celebrated straits. But the narrowest part of the channel is found to the northward of the old Turkish castles between the cities of Cestus and Abydos. It was here that the adventurous Leander braved the passage of the flood for the possession of his mistress. It was here likewise, in a place where the distance between the opposite banks cannot exceed five hundred paces, that Xerxes imposed a stupendous bridge of boats, for the purpose of transporting into Europe a hundred and seventy myriads of barbarians. A sea contracted within such narrow limits may seem but ill to deserve the singular epithet of *broad*, which Homer, as well as Orpheus, has frequently bestowed on the Hellespont. But our ideas of greatness are of a relative nature: the traveller, and

especially the poet, who sailed along the Hellespont, who pursued the windings of the stream, and contemplated the rural scenery, which appeared on every side to terminate the prospect, insensibly lost the remembrance of the sea: and his fancy painted those celebrated straits, with all the attributes of a mighty river flowing with a swift current, in the midst of a woody and inland country, and at length through a wide mouth, discharging itself into the Ægean or Archipelago. Ancient Troy, seated on an eminence at the foot of Mount Ida, overlooked the mouth of the Hellespont, which scarcely received an accession of waters from the tribute of those immortal rivulets the Simois and Scamander. The Grecian camp had stretched twelve miles along the shore from the Sigæan to the Rhætean promontory; and the flanks of the army were guarded by the bravest chiefs who fought under the banners of Agamemnon. The first of those promontories was occupied by Achilles with his invincible Myrmidons, and the dauntless Ajax pitched his tents on the other. After Ajax had fallen a sacrifice to his disappointed pride, and to the ingratitude of the Greeks, his sepulchre was erected on the ground where he had defended the navy against the rage of Jove and of Hector: and the citizens of the rising town of Rhætium

celebrated his memory with divine honours. Before Constantine gave a just preference to the situation of Byzantium, he had conceived the design of erecting the seat of empire on this celebrated spot, from whence the Romans derived their fabulous origin. The extensive plain which lies below Ancient Troy, towards the Rhætean promontory and the tomb of Ajax, was first chosen for his new capital: and though the undertaking was soon relinquished, the stately remains of unfinished walls and towers attracted the notice of all who sailed through the straits of the Hellespont.

We are at present qualified to view the advantageous position of Constantinople: which appears to have been formed by Nature for the centre and capital of a great monarchy. Situated in the forty-first degree of latitude, the Imperial city commanded, from her seven hills, the opposite shores of Europe and Asia; the climate was healthy and temperate, the soil fertile, the harbour secure and capacious: and the approach on the side of the continent was of small extent and easy defence. The Bosphorus and the Hellespont may be considered as the two gates of Constantinople: and the prince who possessed those important passages could always shut them against a naval enemy, and open them to the fleets of

commerce. The preservation of the eastern provinces may, in some degree, be ascribed to the policy of Constantine, as the Barbarians of the Euxine, who in the preceding age had poured their armaments into the heart of the Mediterranean, soon desisted from the exercise of piracy, and despaired of forcing this insurmountable barrier. When the gates of the Hellespont and Bosphorus were shut, the capital still enjoyed, within their spacious enclosure, every production which could supply the wants, or gratify the luxury, of its numerous inhabitants. The sea-coasts of Thrace and Bithynia, which languish under the weight of Turkish oppression, still exhibit a rich prospect of vineyards, of gardens, and of plentiful harvests: and the Propontis has ever been renowned for an inexhaustible store of the most exquisite fish, that are taken in their stated seasons, without skill, and almost without labour. But when the passages of the Straits were thrown open for trade, they alternately admitted the natural and artificial riches of the north and south, of the Euxine, and of the Mediterranean. Whatever rude commodities were collected in the forests of Germany and Scythia, as far as the sources of the Tanais and the Borysthenes; whatsoever was manufactured by the skill of Europe or Asia; the corn of Egypt,

and the gems and spices of the farthest India, were brought by the varying winds into the port of Constantinople, which, for many ages, attracted the commerce of the ancient world.

—*Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*

X  
GENIUS AND IMITATION

SIR JOSHUA REYNOLDS

WHAT we now call Genius. begins. not where rules. abstractedly taken. end; but where known vulgar and trite rules have no longer any place. It must of necessity be. that even works of Genius. like every other effect, as they must have their cause, must likewise have their rules; it cannot be by chance that excellencies are produced with any constancy or any certainty, for this is not the nature of chance; but the rules by which men of extraordinary parts. and such as are called men of Genius. work. are either such as they discover by their own peculiar observations. or of such a nice texture as not easily to admit being expressed in words: especially as artists are not very frequently skilful in that mode of communicating ideas. Unsubstantial. however, as these rules may seem, and difficult as it may be to convey them in writing. they are still seen and felt in the mind of the artist: and he works from them with as much certainty as if they were embodied, as I may say, upon paper. It is true, these refined principles cannot be



always made palpable, like the more gross rules of art; yet it does not follow, but that the mind may be put in such a train, that propriety, which words, particularly words of unpractised writers, such as we are, can but very feebly suggest.

Invention is one of the great marks of genius: but if we consult experience, we shall find, that it is by being conversant with the inventions of others, that we learn to invent; as by reading the thoughts of others we learn to think.

Whoever has so far formed his taste, as to be able to relish and feel the beauties of the great masters, has gone a great way in his study: for, merely from a consciousness of this relish of the right, the mind swells with an inward pride, and is almost as powerfully affected, as if it had itself produced what it admires. Our hearts, frequently warmed in this manner by the contact of those whom we wish to resemble, will undoubtedly catch something of their way of thinking: and we shall receive in our own bosoms some radiation at least of their fire and splendour. That disposition, which is so strong in children, still continues with us, of catching involuntarily the general air and manner of those with whom we are most conversant; with this difference only, that a young

mind is naturally pliable and imitative; but in a more advanced state it grows rigid. and must be warmed and softened before it will receive a deep impression.

From these considerations. which a little of your own reflection will carry a great way further, it appears. of what great consequence it is. that our minds should be habituated to the contemplation of excellence; and that. far from being contented to make such habits the discipline of our youth only. we should. to the last moment of our lives. continue a settled intercourse with all the true examples of grandeur. Their inventions are not only the food of our infancy. but the substance which supplies the fullest maturity of our vigour.

The mind is but a barren soil: a soil which is soon exhausted. and will produce *no* crop. or *only one*. unless it be continually fertilized and enriched with foreign matter.

When we have had continually before us the great works of art to impregnate our minds with kindred ideas. we are then. and not till then. fit to produce something of the same species. We behold all about us with the eyes of those penetrating observers whose works we contemplate: and our minds. accustomed to think the thoughts of the noblest and brightest intellects. are

prepared for the discovery and selection of all that is great and noble in nature. The greatest natural genius cannot subsist on its own stock: he who resolves never to ransack any mind but his own, will be soon reduced, from mere barrenness, to the poorest of all imitations: he will be obliged to imitate himself, and to repeat what he has before often repeated. When we know the subject designed by such men, it will never be difficult to guess what kind of work is to be produced.

It is vain for painters or poets to endeavour to invent without materials on which the mind may work, and from which invention must originate. Nothing can come of nothing.

Homer is supposed to be possessed of all the learning of his time; and we are certain that Michael Angelo, and Raffaele, were equally possessed of all the knowledge in the art which had been discovered in the works of their predecessors.

A man enriched by an assemblage of all the treasures of ancient and modern art, will be more elevated and fruitful in resources, in proportion to the number of ideas which have been carefully collected and thoroughly digested. There can be no doubt but that he who has the most materials has the greatest means of

invention: and if he has not the power of using them, it must proceed from a feebleness of intellect: or from the confused manner in which those collections have been laid up in his mind.

The addition of other men's judgment is so far from weakening our own, as is the opinion of many, that it will fashion and consolidate those ideas of excellence which lay in embryo, feeble, ill-shaped, and confused, but which are finished and put in order by the authority and practice of those whose works may be said to have been consecrated by having stood the test of ages.

The mind, or genius, has been compared to a spark of fire, which is smothered by a heap of fuel, and prevented from blazing into a flame. This simile, which is made use of by the younger Pliny, may be easily mistaken for argument or proof. But there is no danger of the mind's being overburthened with knowledge, or the genius extinguished by an addition of images; on the contrary, these acquisitions may as well, perhaps better, be compared, if comparisons signified anything in reasoning, to the supply of living embers, which will contribute to strengthen the spark, that without the association of more fuel would have died away. The truth is, he whose feebleness is such as to make other men's thoughts an

incumbrance to him, can have no very great strength of mind or genius of his own to be destroyed; so that not much harm will be done at worst.

—*Discourses on Art*

## XI THE GENTLE GIANTESS

CHARLES LAMB

THE widow Blacket. of Oxford. is the largest female I ever had the pleasure of beholding. There may be her parallel upon the earth; but I surely never saw it. I take her to be lineally descended from the maid's aunt of Brainford. who caused Master Ford such uneasiness. She hath Atlantean shoulders: and. as she stoopeth in her gait.—with as few offences to answer for in her own particular as any one of Eve's daughters.—her back seems broad enough to bear the blame of all the peccadilloes that have been committed since Adam. She girdeth her waist—or what she is pleased to esteem as such—nearly up to her shoulders; from beneath which that huge dorsal expanse. in mountainous declivity, emergeth. Respect for her alone preventeth the idle boys. who follow her about in shoals. whenever she cometh abroad. from getting up and riding. But her presence infallibly commands a reverence. She is indeed. as the Americans would express it. something awful. Her person is a burthen to herself no less than to the ground which bears

her. To her mighty bone, she had a pinguitude withal, which makes the depth of winter to her the most desirable season. Her distress in the warmer solstice is pitiable. During the months of July and August, she usually renteth a cool cellar, where ices are kept, whereinto she descendeth when Sirius rageth. She dates from a hot Thursday,—some twenty-five years ago. Her apartment in summer is pervious to the four winds. Two doors, in north and south direction, and two windows, fronting the rising and the setting sun, never closed, from every cardinal point catch the contributory breezes. She loves to enjoy what she calls a quadruple draught. That must be a shrewd zephyr that can escape her. I owe a painful face-ache, which oppresses me at this moment, to a cold caught, sitting by her, one day in last July, at this receipt of coolness. Her fan, in ordinary, resembleth a banner spread, which she keepeth continually on the alert to detect the least breeze. She possesseth an active and gadding mind, totally incommensurate with her person. No one delighteth more than herself in country exercises and pastimes. I have passed many an agreeable holiday with her in her favourite park at Woodstock. She performs her part in these delightful ambulatory excursions by the aid of a portable garden-chair. She setteth out

with you at a fair foot-gallop, which she keepeth up till you are both well-breathed, and then reposeth she for a few seconds. Then she is up again for a hundred paces or so, and again resteth; her movements, on these sprightly occasions, being something between walking and flying. Her great weight seemeth to propel her forward, ostrich-fashion. In this kind of relieved marching. I have traversed with her many scores of acres on those well-wooded and well-watered domains. Her delight at Oxford is in the public walks and gardens, where, when the weather is not too oppressive, she passeth much of her valuable time. There is a bench at Maudlin, or rather situated between the frontiers of that and—'s College (some litigation, latterly, about repairs, has vested the property of it finally in—'s), where, at the hour of noon, she is ordinarily to be found sitting,—so she calls it by courtesy,—but, in fact, pressing and breaking of it down with her enormous settlement; as both those foundations,—who, however, are good-natured enough to wink at it,—have found, I believe, to their cost. Here she taketh the fresh air, principally at vacation-times, when the walks are freest from interruption of the younger fry of students. Here she passeth her idle hours, not idly, but generally accompanied with a



book,—blessed if she can but intercept some resident Fellow (as usually there are some of that brood left behind at these periods), or stray Master of Arts (to most of them she is better known than their dinner bell), with whom she may confer upon any curious topic of literature. I have seen these shy gownsmen, who truly set but a very slight value upon female conversation, cast a hawk's eye upon her from the length of Maudlin Grove, and warily glide off into another walk,—true monks as they are; and urgently neglecting the delicacies of her polished converse for their own perverse and uncommunicating solitariness. Within-doors, her principal diversion is music, vocal and instrumental; in both of which she is no mean professor. Her voice is wonderfully fine; but till I got used to it, I confess it staggered me. It is, for all the world, like that of a piping bullfinch; while, from her size and stature, you would expect notes to drown the deep organ. The shake, which most fine singers reserve for the close or cadence, by some unaccountable flexibility, or tremulousness of pipe, she carrieth quite through the composition; so that her time, to a common air or ballad, keeps double motion, like the earth,—running the primary circuit of the tune, and still revolving upon its own axis. The effect, as I said

before, when you are used to it, is as agreeable as it is altogether new and surprising. The spacious apartment of her outward frame lodgeth a soul in all respects disproportionate. Of more than mortal make, she evinceth withal a trembling sensibility, a yielding infirmity of purpose, a quick susceptibility to reproach, and all the train of diffident and blushing virtues, which for their habitation usually seek out a feeble frame, an attenuated and meagre constitution. With more than man's bulk, her humours and occupations are eminently feminine. She sighs,—being six foot high. She languisheth,—being two feet wide. She worketh slender springs upon the delicate muslin,—her fingers being capable of moulding a Colossus. She sippeth her wine out of her glass daintily—her capacity being that of a tun of Heidelberg. She goeth mincingly with those feet of hers, whose solidity need not fear the black ox's pressure. Softest and largest of thy sex, adieu! By what parting attribute may I salute thee, last and best of the Titanesses.—Ogress, fed with milk instead of blood; not least, or least-hand-some, among Oxford's stately structures.—Oxford, who, in its dearest time of vacation, can never properly be said to be empty, having thee to fill it.

—*Miscellaneous Essays*

XII  
MRS. SIDDONS

WILLIAM HAZLITT

MRS. SIDDONS was in the meridian of her reputation when I first became acquainted with the stage. She was an established veteran, when I was an unfledged novice: and, perhaps, played those scenes without emotion, which filled me, and so many others, with delight and awe. So far I had the advantage of her, and of myself too. I did not then analyse her excellences as I should now; or divide her merits into physical and intellectual advantages, or see that her majestic form rose up against misfortune in equal sublimity, an antagonist power to it; but the total impression (unquestioned, unrefined upon) overwhelmed and drowned me in a flood of tears. I was stunned and torpid after seeing her in any of her great parts. I was uneasy, and hardly myself: but I felt (more than ever) that human life was something very far from being indifferent, and I seemed to have got a key to unlock the springs of joy and sorrow in the human heart. This was no mean possession, and I availed myself of it with no sparing hand. The pleasure

I anticipated at that time in witnessing her dullest performance, was certainly greater than I should have now in seeing her in the most brilliant. The very sight of her name in the play-bills in "Tamerlane" or "Alexander the Great" threw a light upon the day, and drew after it a long trail of Eastern glory, a joy and felicity unutterable, that has since vanished in the mists of criticism and idle distinctions. I was in a trance, and my dreams were of mighty empires fallen, of vast burning zones, of waning time, of Persian thrones and them that sat on them, of sovereign beauty, and of victors vanquished by love. Death and Life played their pageant before me. The gates were unbarred, the folding-doors of fancy were thrown open, and I saw all that mankind had been, or that I myself could conceive, pass in review before me.

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The homage she has received is greater than that which is paid to queens. The enthusiasm she excited had something idolatrous about it; she was regarded less with admiration than with wonder, as if a being of a superior order had dropped from another sphere to awe the world with the majesty of her appearance. She raised tragedy to the skies, or brought it down from thence. It was something above nature. We can con-

ceive of nothing grander. She embodied to our imagination the fables of mythology, of the heroic and deified mortals of older time. She was not less than a goddess, or than a prophetess inspired by the gods. Power was seated on her brow, passion emanated from her breast as from a shrine. She was tragedy personified. She was the stateliest ornament of the public mind. She was not only the idol of the people, she not only hushed the tumultuous shouts of the pit in breathless expectation, and quenched the blaze of surrounding beauty in silent tears, but to the retired and lonely student, through long years of solitude, her face has shone as if an eye had appeared from heaven: her name has been as if a voice had opened the chambers of the human heart, or as if a trumpet had awakened the sleeping and the dead. To have seen Mrs. Siddons was an event in every one's life; and does she think we have forgot her?

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Who shall give us Mrs. Siddons again, but in a waking dream, a beatific vision of past years, crowned with other hopes and other feelings, whose pomp is almost faded, and their glory and their power gone? Who shall in our time (or can ever to the eye of fancy) fill the stage like her, with the dignity of their persons

and the emanations of their minds? Or who shall sit majestic on the throne of tragedy—a Goddess, a prophetess, and a Muse—from which the lightning of her eye flashed o’er the mind. startling its inmost thoughts, and the thunder of her voice circled through the labouring breast, rousing deep and scarce-known feelings from their slumber? Who shall stalk over the stage of horrors, its presiding genius. or “play the hostess” at the banqueting scene of murder? Who shall walk in sleepless ecstasy of soul. and haunt the mind’s eye ever after with the dread pageantry of suffering and of guilt? Who shall make tragedy once more stand with its feet upon the earth, and with its head raised above the skies, weeping tears and blood? That loss is not to be repaired. While the stage lasts. there will never be another Mrs. Siddons. Tragedy seemed to set with her; and the rest are but blazing comets. or fiery exhalations.

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Mrs. Siddons seldom if ever goes (into the boxes). and yet she is almost the only thing left worth seeing there. She need not stay away on account of any theory that I can form. She is out of the pale of all theories. and annihilates all rules. Wherever she sits there is grace and grandeur. there is tragedy personified. Her

seat is the undivided throne of the Tragic Muse. She had no need of the robes, the sweeping train, the ornaments of the stage; in herself she is as great as any being she ever represented in the ripeness and plenitude of her power.

—*A View of the English Stage*

### XIII

## DEATHS OF LITTLE CHILDREN

LEIGH HUNT

A GRECIAN philosopher being asked why he wept for the death of his son, since the sorrow was in vain, replied, "I weep on that account." And his answer became his wisdom. It is only for sophists to contend that we, whose eyes contain the fountain of tears, need never give way to them. It would be unwise not to do so on some occasions. Sorrow unlocks them in her balmy moods. The first bursts may be bitter and overwhelming; but the soil on which they pour would be worse without them. They refresh the fever of the soul—the dry misery which parches the countenance into furrows, and renders us liable to our most terrible "flesh-quakes."

There are sorrows, it is true, so great, that to give them some of the ordinary vents is to run a hazard of being overthrown. These we must rather strengthen ourselves to resist, or bow quietly and drily down, in order to let them pass over us, as the traveller does the wind of the desert. But where we feel that tears would



relieve us, it is false philosophy to deny ourselves at least that first refreshment; and it is always false consolation to tell people that because they cannot help a thing, they are not to mind it. The true way is, to let them grapple with the unavoidable sorrow, and try to win it into gentleness by a reasonable yielding. There are griefs so gentle in their very nature that it would be worse than false heroism to refuse them a tear. Of this kind are the deaths of infants. Particular circumstances may render it more or less advisable to indulge in grief for the loss of a little child: but, in general, parents should be no more advised to repress their first tears on such an occasion, than to repress their smiles towards a child surviving, or to indulge in any other sympathy. It is an appeal to the same gentle tenderness; and such appeals are never made in vain. The end of them is an acquittal from the harsher bonds of affliction—from the tying down of the spirit to one melancholy idea.

It is the nature of tears of this kind, however strongly they may gush forth, to run into quiet waters at last. We cannot easily, for the whole course of our lives, think with pain of any good and kind person whom we have lost. It is the divine nature of their qualities to conquer pain and death itself: to turn the

memory of them into pleasure; to survive with a placid aspect in our imaginations. We are writing at this moment just opposite a spot which contains the grave of one inexpressibly dear to us. We see from our windows the trees about it, and the church spire. The green fields lie around. The clouds are travelling overhead, alternately taking away the sunshine and restoring it. The vernal winds, piping of the flowery summer-time, are nevertheless calling to mind the far distant and dangerous ocean, which the heart that lies in that grave had many reasons to think of. And yet the sight of this spot does not give us pain. So far from it, it is the existence of that grave which doubles every charm of the spot; which links the pleasures of our childhood and manhood together; which puts a hushing tenderness in the winds and a patient joy upon the landscape which seems to unite heaven and earth, mortality and immortality, the grass of the tomb and the grass of the green field; and gives a more maternal aspect to the whole kindness of Nature. It does not hinder gaiety itself. Happiness was what its tenant, through all her troubles, would have diffused. To diffuse happiness, and to enjoy it, is not only carrying on her wishes, but realizing her hopes; and gaiety, freed from its only pollutions, malignity and

want of sympathy, is but a child playing about the knees of its mother.

The remembered innocence and endearments of a child stand us instead of virtues that have died older. Children have not exercised the voluntary offices of friendship; they have not chosen to be kind and good to us; nor stood by us, from conscious will, in the hour of adversity. But they have shared their pleasures and pains with us as well as they could; the interchange of good offices between us has, of necessity, been less mingled with the troubles of the world; the sorrow arising from their death is the only one which we can associate with their memories. These are happy thoughts that cannot die. Our loss may always render them pensive; but they will not always be painful. It is a part of the benignity of Nature that pain does not survive like pleasure, at any time, much less where the cause of it is an innocent one. The smile will remain reflected by memory, as the moon reflects the light upon us when the sun has gone into heaven.

When writers like ourselves quarrel with earthly pain (we mean writers of the same intentions, without implying, of course, anything about abilities or otherwise), they are misunderstood if they are supposed to

quarrel with pains of every sort. This would be idle and effeminate. They do not pretend, indeed, that humanity might not wish, if it could, to be entirely free from pain; for it endeavours, at all times, to turn pain into pleasure; or at least to set off the one with the other, to make the former a zest and the latter a refreshment. The most unaffected dignity of suffering does this, and if wise, acknowledges it. The greatest benevolence towards others, the most unselfish relish of their pleasures, even at its own expense, does not look to increasing the general stock of happiness, though content, if it could, to have its identity swallowed up in that splendid contemplation. We are far from meaning that this is to be called selfishness. We are far, indeed, from thinking so, or of so confounding words. But neither is it to be called pain when most unselfish, if disinterestedness be truly understood. The pain that is in it softens into pleasure, as the darker hue of the rainbow melts into the brighter. Yet even if a harsher line is to be drawn between the pain and pleasure of the most unselfish mind (and ill-health, for instance, may draw it), we should not quarrel with it if it contributes to the general mass of comfort, and were of a nature which general kindness could not avoid. Made as we are, there are certain pains without

which it would be difficult to conceive certain great and overbalancing pleasures. We may conceive it possible for beings to be made entirely happy; but in our composition something of pain seems to be a necessary ingredient, in order that the materials may turn to as fine account as possible, though our clay, in the course of ages and experience, may be refined more and more. We may get rid of the worst earth, though not of earth itself.

Now, the liability to the loss of children—or rather what renders us sensible of it, the occasional loss itself—seems to be one of these necessary bitters thrown into the cup of humanity. We do not mean that every one must lose one of his children in order to enjoy the rest or that every individual loss afflicts us in the same proportion. We allude to the deaths of infants in general. These might be as few as we could render them. But if none at all ever took place, we should regard every little child as a man or a woman secured; and it will easily be conceived what a world of endearing cares and hopes this security would endanger. The very idea of infancy would lose its continuity with us. Girls and boys would be future men and women, not present children. They would have attained their full growth in our imaginations, and might as well have been men and

women at once. On the other hand, those who have lost an infant, are never, as it were, without an infant child. They are the only persons who, in one sense, retain it always, and they furnish their neighbours with the same idea. The other children grow up to manhood and womanhood, and suffer all the changes of mortality. This one alone is rendered an immortal child. Death has arrested it with his kindly harshness, and blessed it into an eternal image of youth and innocence.

Of such as these are the pleasantest shapes that visit our fancy and our hopes. They are the ever-smiling emblems of joy, the prettiest pages that wait upon imagination. Lastly, "Of these is the kingdom of heaven." Wherever there is a province of that benevolent and all-accessible empire, whether on earth or elsewhere, such are the gentle spirits that must inhabit it. To such simplicity, or the resemblance of it, must they come. Such must be the ready confidence of their hearts and creativeness of their fancy. And so ignorant must they be of the "knowledge of good and evil," losing their discernment of that self-created trouble, by enjoying the garden before them, and not being ashamed of what is kindly and innocent.

—*The Indicator*

XIV  
A HAPPY HOME  
THOMAS DE QUINCEY

LET there be a cottage, standing in a valley, eighteen miles from any town—no spacious valley, but about two miles long, by three-quarters of a mile in average width; the benefit of which provision is that all the families resident within its circuit will compose, as it were, one larger household personally familiar to your eye, and more or less interesting to your affections. Let the mountains be real mountains, between three and four thousand feet high: and the cottage, a real cottage; not, as a witty author has it, ‘a cottage with a double coach house;’ let it be, in fact—for I must abide by the actual scene a white cottage embowered with flowering shrubs, so chosen as to unfold a succession of flowers upon the walls, and clustering round the windows through all the months of spring, summer, and autumn—beginning, in fact, with May roses and ending with jasmine. Let it, however, not be spring, nor summer, nor autumn—but winter, in its sternest shape. This is a most important point in the science of happiness. And I am

surprised to see people overlook it, and think it matter of congratulation that winter is going; or, if coming, is not likely to be a severe one. On the contrary, I put up a petition annually for as much snow, hail, frost, or storm, of one kind or other, as the skies can possibly afford us. Surely everybody is aware of the divine pleasures which attend a winter fire-side: candles at four o'clock. warm hearth-rugs, tea, a fair tea-maker, shutters closed. curtains flowing in ample draperies on the floor. whilst the wind and rain are raging audibly without.

And at the doors and windows seem to call,  
As heav'n and earth they would together mell;  
Yet the least entrance find they none at all;  
Whence sweeter grows our rest secure in massy hall.

—*Castle of Indolence.*

All these are items in the description of a winter evening, which surely must be familiar to everybody born in a high latitude. And it is evident, that most of these delicacies, like ice-cream, require a very low temperature of the atmosphere to produce them: they are fruits which cannot be ripened without weather stormy or inclement, in some way or other. I am not 'particular' as people say, whether it be snow or black frost, or wind so strong, that (as Mr.—says) 'you may lean your back against



it like a post.' I can put up even with rain, provided it rains cats and dogs; but something of the sort I must have: and, if I have it not, I think myself in a manner ill-used: for why am I called on to pay so heavily for winter, in coals, and candles, and various privations that will occur even to gentlemen, if I am not to have the article good of its kind? No: a Canadian winter for my money; or a Russian one, where every man is but a co-proprietor with the north wind in the fee-simple of his own ears. Indeed, so great an epicure am I in this matter, that I cannot relish a winter night fully if it be much past St. Thomas's day, and have degenerated into disgusting tendencies to vernal appearances; no, it must be divided by a thick wall of dark nights from all return of light and sunshine.—From the latter weeks of October to Christmas-eve, therefore, is the period during which happiness is in season, which, in my judgment, enters the room with the tea-tray; for tea, though ridiculed by those who are naturally of coarse nerves, or are become so from wine-drinking, and are not susceptible of influence from so refined a stimulant, will always be the favourite beverage of the intellectual; and, for my part, I would have joined Dr. Johnson in a *bellum internecinum* against Jonas Hanway, or any other impious

person who should presume to disparage it.—But here, to save myself the trouble of too much verbal description. I will introduce a painter; and give him directions for the rest of the picture. Painters do not like white cottages, unless a good deal weather-stained; but as the reader now understands that it is a winter night, his services will not be required, except for the inside of the house.

Paint me, then, a room seventeen feet by twelve, and not more than seven and a half feet high. This, reader, is somewhat ambitiously styled, in my family, the drawing-room; but, being contrived ‘a double debt to pay,’ it is also and more justly, termed the library; for it happens that books are the only article of property in which I am richer than my neighbours. Of these, I have about five thousand, collected gradually since my eighteenth year. Therefore, painter, put as many as you can into this room. Make it populous with books: and, furthermore, paint me a good fire; and furniture, plain and modest, befitting the unpretending cottage of a scholar. And, near the fire paint me a tea-table; and, as it is clear that no creature can come to see one such a stormy night, place only two cups and saucers on the tea-tray; and, if you know how to paint such a thing

symbolically, or otherwise. paint me an eternal teapot—eternal *a parte ante*, and *a parte post*; for I usually drink tea from eight o'clock at night to four o'clock in the morning. And, as it is very unpleasant to make tea, or to pour it out for oneself, paint me a lovely young woman, sitting at the table.

—*The Confessions of an English Opium-Eater*

XV  
RURAL LIFE IN ENGLAND

WASHINGTON IRVING

Oh! friendly to the best pursuits of man,  
Friendly to thought, to virtue and to peace,  
Domestic life in rural pleasures past!

—*Cowper*

THE stranger who would form a correct opinion of the English character must not confine his observations to the metropolis. He must go forth into the country; he must sojourn in villages and hamlets; he must visit castles, villas, farm-houses, cottages; he must wander through parks and gardens, along hedges and green lanes; he must loiter about country churches; attend wakes and fairs, and other rural festivals; and cope with the people in all their conditions, and all their habits and humours.

In some countries the large cities absorb the wealth and fashion of the nation; they are the only fixed abodes of elegant and intelligent society, and the country is inhabited almost entirely by boorish peasantry. In England, on the contrary, the metropolis is a mere

gathering-place. or general rendezvous, of the polite classes. where they devote a small portion of the year to a hurry of gaiety and dissipation. and. having indulged this kind of carnival. return again to the apparently more congenial habits of rural life. The various orders of society are therefore diffused over the whole surface of the kingdom. and the most retired neighbourhoods afford specimens of the different ranks.

The English. in fact. are strongly gifted with the rural feeling. They possess a quick sensibility to the beauties of nature. and a keen relish for the pleasures and employments of the country. This passion seems inherent in them. Even the inhabitants of cities. born and brought up among brick walls and bustling streets. enter with facility into rural habits. and evince a taste for rural occupation. The merchant has his snug retreat in the vicinity of the metropolis. where he often displays as much pride and zeal in the cultivation of his flower-garden and the maturing of his fruits as he does in the conduct of his business and the success of a commercial enterprise. Even those less fortunate individuals who are doomed to pass their lives in the midst of din and traffic contrive to have something that shall remind them of the green aspect of nature. In the most

dark and dingy quarters of the city the drawing-room window resembles frequently a bank of flowers; every spot capable of vegetation has its grass-plot and flower-bed, and every square its mimic park, laid out with picturesque taste and gleaming with refreshing verdure.

Those who see the Englishman only in town are apt to form an unfavourable opinion of his social character. He is either absorbed in business or distracted by the thousand engagements that dissipate time, thought, and feeling in this huge metropolis. He has, therefore, too commonly a look of hurry and abstraction. Wherever he happens to be, he is on the point of going somewhere else: at the moment he is talking on one subject his mind is wandering to another: and while paying a friendly visit he is calculating how he shall economise time so as to pay the other visits allotted in the morning. An immense metropolis, like London, is calculated to make men selfish and uninteresting. In their casual and transient meetings they can but deal briefly in common-places. They present but the cold superficies of character—its rich and genial qualities have no time to be warmed into a flow.

It is in the country that the Englishman gives scope to his natural feelings. He breaks loose gladly from

the cold formalities and negative civilities of town, throws off his habits of shy reserve, and becomes joyous and free-hearted. He manages to collect round him all the conveniences and elegancies of polite life and to banish its restraints. His country-seat abounds with every requisite, either for studious retirement, tasteful gratification, or rural exercise. Books, paintings, music, horses, dogs, and sporting implements of all kinds are at hand. He puts no constraint either upon his guests or himself, but, in the true spirit of hospitality, provides the means of enjoyment, and leaves every one to partake according to his inclination.

The taste of the English in the cultivation of land, and in what is called landscape gardening, is unrivalled. They have studied Nature intently, and discovered an exquisite sense of her beautiful forms and harmonious combinations. Those charms which, in other countries, she lavishes in wild solitudes are here assembled round the haunts of domestic life. They seem to have caught her coy and furtive graces, and spread them, like witchery, about their rural abodes.

Nothing can be more imposing than the magnificence of English park scenery. Vast lawns that extend like sheets of vivid green, with here and there clumps of

gigantic trees, heaping up rich piles of foliage; the solemn pomp of groves and woodland glades, with the deer trooping in silent herds across them; the hare, bounding away to the covert; or the pheasant, suddenly bursting upon the wing. The brook, taught to wind in natural meanderings or expand into a glassy lake; the sequestered pool, reflecting the quivering trees, with the yellow leaf sleeping on its bosom and the trout roaming fearlessly about its limpid waters; while some rustic temple, or sylvan statue, grown green and dank with age, gives an air of classic sanctity to the seclusion.

These are but a few of the features of park scenery; but what most delights me is the creative talent with which the English decorate the unostentatious abodes of middle life. The rudest habitation, the most unpromising and scanty portion of land, in the hands of an Englishman of taste, becomes a little paradise. With a nicely discriminating eye, he seizes at once upon its capabilities, and pictures in his mind the future landscape. The sterile spot grows into loveliness under his hand, and yet the operations of art which produce the effect are scarcely to be perceived. The cherishing and training of some trees; the cautious pruning of others: the nice distribution of flowers and plants of tender and



graceful foliage; the introduction of a green slope of velvet turf; the partial opening to a peep of blue distance or silver gleam of water;—all these are managed with a delicate tact, a pervading yet quiet assiduity, like the magic touchings with which a painter finishes up a favourite picture.

The residence of people of fortune and refinement in the country has diffused a degree of taste and elegance in rural economy that descends to the lowest class. The very labourer, with his thatched cottage and narrow slip of ground, attends to their embellishment. The trim hedge, the grassplot before the door, the little flower-bed bordered with snug box, the woodbine trained up against the wall and hanging its blossoms about the lattice, the pot of flowers in the window, the holly providently planted about the house to cheat winter of its dreariness, and to throw in a semblance of green summer to cheer the fireside—all these bespeak the influence of taste flowing down from high sources and pervading the lowest levels of the public mind. If ever Love, as poets sing, delights to visit a cottage, it must be the cottage of an English peasant.

The fondness for rural life among the higher classes of the English has had a great and salutary effect upon

the national character. I do not know a finer race of men than the English gentlemen. Instead of the softness and effeminacy which characterize the men of rank in most countries. they exhibit a union of elegance and strength, a robustness of frame and freshness of complexion. which I am inclined to attribute to their living so much in the open air. and pursuing so eagerly the invigorating recreations of the country. The hardy exercises produce also a healthful tone of mind and spirits. and a manliness and simplicity of manners. which even the follies and dissipations of the town cannot easily pervert. and can never entirely destroy. In the country. too. the different orders of society seem to approach more freely. to be more disposed to blend and operate favourably upon each other. The distinctions between them do not appear to be so marked and impassable as in the cities. The manner in which property has been distributed into small estates and farms has established a regular gradation from the noblemen. through the classes of gentry, small landed proprietors. and substantial farmers, down to the labouring peasantry. and. while it has thus banded the extremes of society together. has infused into each intermediate rank a spirit of independence. This. it must be confessed. is not so

universally the case at present as it was formerly; the larger estates having, in late years of distress, absorbed the smaller, and, in some parts of the country, almost annihilated the sturdy race of small farmers. These, however, I believe, are but casual breaks in the general system I have mentioned.

In rural occupation there is nothing mean and debasing. It leads a man forth among scenes of natural grandeur and beauty: it leaves him to the workings of his own mind, operated upon by the purest and most elevating of external influences. Such a man may be simple and rough, but he cannot be vulgar. The man of refinement, therefore, finds nothing revolting in an intercourse with the lower orders in rural life, as he does when he casually mingles with the lower orders of cities. He lays aside his distance and reserve, and is glad to waive the distinctions of rank, and to enter into the honest, heartfelt enjoyments of common life. Indeed, the very amusements of the country bring men more and more together, and the sounds of hound and horn blend all feelings into harmony. I believe this is one great reason why the nobility and gentry are more popular among the inferior orders in England than they are in any other country, and why the latter have endured so many

excessive pressures and extremities, without repining more generally at the unequal distribution of fortune and privilege.

To this mingling of cultivated and rustic society may also be attributed the rural feeling that runs through British literature—the frequent use of illustrations from rural life: those incomparable descriptions of Nature that abound in the British poets, that have continued down from “The Flower and the Leaf” of Chaucer, and have brought into our closets all the freshness and fragrance of the dewy landscape. The pastoral writers of other countries appear as if they had paid Nature an occasional visit, and become acquainted with her general charms: but the British poets have lived and revelled with her—they have wooed her in her most secret haunts—they have watched her minutest caprices. A spray could not tremble in the breeze—a leaf could not rustle to the ground—a diamond drop could not patter in the stream—a fragrance could not exhale from the humble violet, nor a daisy unfold its crimson tints to the morning, but it has been noticed by these impassioned and delicate observers, and wrought up into some beautiful morality.

The effect of this devotion of elegant minds to rural

occupations has been wonderful on the face of the country. A great part of the island is rather level, and would be monotonous, were it not for the charms of culture; but it is studded and gemmed, as it were, with castles and palaces, and embroidered with parks and gardens. It does not abound in grand and sublime prospects, but rather in little home scenes of rural repose and sheltered quiet. Every antique farm-house and mossgrown cottage is a picture; and as the roads are continually winding, and the view is shut in by groves and hedges, the eye is delighted by a continual succession of small landscapes of captivating loveliness.

The great charm, however, of English scenery is the moral feeling that seems to pervade it. It is associated in the mind with ideas of order, of quiet, of sober, well-established principles, of hoary usage and reverend custom. Everything seems to be the growth of ages of regular and peaceful existence. The old church of remote architecture, with its low, massive portal; its Gothic tower; its windows rich with tracery and painted glass, unscrupulous preservation; its stately monuments of warriors and worthies of the olden time, ancestors of the present lords of the soil; its tombstones, recording successive

generations of sturdy yeomanry, whose progeny still plough the same fields, and kneel at the same altar; the parsonage, a quaint irregular pile, partly antiquated, but repaired and altered in the tastes of various ages and occupants: the stile and foot-path leading from the churchyard, across pleasant fields, and along shady hedgerows, according to an immemorial right of way; the neighbouring village, with its venerable cottages, its public green sheltered by trees, under which the forefathers of the present race have sported; the antique family mansion, standing apart in some little rural domain, but looking down with a protecting air on the surrounding scene.—all these common features of English landscape evince a calm and settled security, and hereditary transmission of home-bred virtues and local attachments, that speak deeply and touchingly for the moral character of the nation.

It is a pleasing sight, of a Sunday morning, when the bell is sending its sober melody across the quiet fields, to behold the peasantry in their best finery, with ruddy faces and modest cheerfulness, thronging tranquilly along the green lanes to church; but it is still more pleasing to see them in the evenings, gathering about their cottage doors and appearing to exult in the humble comforts and

embellishments which their own hands have spread around them.

It is this sweet home feeling, this settled repose of affection in the domestic scene, that is, after all, the parent of the steadiest virtues and purest enjoyments: and I cannot close these desultory remarks better than by quoting the words of a modern English poet who has depicted it with remarkable felicity:—

Through each gradation, from the eastled hall.  
The city dome, the villa crowned with shade.  
But chief from modest mansions numberless.  
In town or hamlet, sheltering middle life.  
Down to the cottaged vale, and straw-roof'd shed:  
This western isle hath long been famed for scenes  
Where bliss domestic finds a dwelling-place;  
Domestic bliss, that, like a harmless dove  
(Honour and sweet endearment keeping guard),  
Can centre in a little quiet nest  
All that desire would fly for through the earth;  
That can, the world eluding, be itself  
A world enjoyed: that wants no witnesses  
But its own sharers, and approving Heaven:  
That, like a flower deep hid in rocky cleft,  
Smiles, though 'tis looking only at the sky.

—*The Sketch-Book*

XVI  
SCOTT'S DOMESTIC LIFE

SIR JOHN LOCKHART

FOR the rest, I presume, it will be allowed that no human character, which we have the opportunity of studying with equal minuteness, had fewer faults mixed up in its texture. The grand virtue of fortitude, the basis of all others, was never displayed in higher perfection than in him; and it was, as perhaps true courage always is, combined with an equally admirable spirit of kindness and humanity. His pride, if we must call it so, undebased by the least tincture of mere vanity, was intertwined with a most exquisite charity, and was not inconsistent with true humility. If ever the principle of kindness was incarnated in a mere man, it was in him; and real kindness can never be but modest. In the social relations of life, where men are most effectually tried, no spot can be detected in him. He was a patient, dutiful, reverent son; a generous, compassionate, tender husband; an honest, careful, and most affectionate father. Never was a more virtuous or a happier fireside than his. The influence of his mighty genius shadowed it



imperceptibly; his calm good sense, and his angelic sweetness of heart and temper, regulated and softened a strict but paternal discipline. His children, as they grew up, understood by degrees the high privilege of their birth; but the profoundest sense of his greatness never disturbed their confidence in his goodness. The buoyant play of his spirits made him sit young among the young; parent and son seemed to live in brotherhood together; and the chivalry of his imagination threw a certain air of courteous gallantry into his relations with his daughters, which gave a very peculiar grace to the fondness of their intercourse. Though there could not be a gentler mother than Lady Scott, on those delicate occasions most interesting to young ladies, they always made their father the first confidant.

Perhaps the most touching evidence of the lasting tenderness of his early domestic feelings was exhibited to his executors, when they opened his repositories in search of his testament, the evening after his burial. On lifting up his desk, we found arranged in careful order a series of little objects, which had obviously been so placed there that his eye might rest on them every morning before he began his tasks. These were the old-fashioned boxes that had garnished his mother's toilet, when he, a sickly child,

slept in her dressing-room—the silver taper-stand which the young advocate had bought for her with his first five-guinea fee—a row of small packets inscribed with her hand, and containing the hair of those of her offspring that had died before her—his father's snuff-box and etui-case—and more things of the like sort, recalling the 'old familiar faces.' The same feeling was apparent in all the arrangement of his private apartment. Pictures of his father and mother were the only ones in his dressing-room. The clumsy antique cabinets that stood there, things of a very different class from the beautiful and costly productions in the public rooms below, had all belonged to the furniture of George's Square. Even his father's rickety washing-stand, with all its cramped appurtenances, though exceedingly unlike what a man of his very scrupulous habits would have selected in these days, kept its ground. The whole place seemed fitted up like a little chapel of the lares.

Such a son and parent could hardly fail in any of the other social relations. No man was a firmer or more indefatigable friend. I knew not that he ever lost one; and a few, with whom, during the energetic middle stage of life, from political differences or other accidental circumstances, he lived less familiarly, had all gathered

round him, and renewed the full warmth of early affection in his later days. There was enough to dignify the connection in their eyes; but nothing to chill it on either side. The imagination that so completely mastered him when he chose to give her the rein was kept under most determined control when any of the positive obligations of active life came into question. A high and pure sense of duty presided over whatever he had to do as a citizen and a magistrate: and as a landlord, he considered his estate as an extension of his hearth.

—*Life of Scott*

## XVII

### HEROES AND HERO-WORSHIP

THOMAS CARLYLE

UNIVERSAL History, the history of what man has accomplished in this world. is at bottom the History of the Great Men who have worked here. They were the leaders of men, these great ones; the modellers, patterns, and in a wide sense creators, of whatsoever the general mass of men contrived to do or to attain; all things that we see standing accomplished in the world are properly the outer material result, the practical realisation and embodiment, of thoughts that dwelt in the Great Men sent into the world: the soul of the whole world's history, it may justly be considered, were the history of these.

One comfort is, that Great Men, taken up any way, are profitable company. We cannot look, however imperfectly, upon a great man, without gaining something by him. He is the living light-fountain, which it is good and pleasant to be near. The light which enlightens, which has enlightened the darkness of the world; and this not as a kindled lamp only, but rather as a natural luminary shining by the gift of Heaven; a

flowing light-fountain, as I say, of native original insight, of manhood and heroic nobleness:—in whose radiance all souls feel that it is well with them.

Worship of a Hero is transeendent admiration of a Great Man. I say, there is, at bottom, nothing else admirable! No nobler feeling than this of admiration for one higher than himself dwells in the breast of man. It is to this hour, and at all hours, the vivifying influence in man's life. Religion I find stand upon it; not Paganism only, but far higher and truer religions,—all religions hitherto known. Hero-worship, heartfelt prostrate admiration, submission, burning, boundless, for a noblest godlike Form of Man,—is not that the germ of Christianity itself? The greatest of all Heroes is One—whom we do not name here! Let sacred silence meditate that sacred matter; you will find it the ultimate perfection of a principle extant throughout man's whole history on earth.

Or, coming into lower, less unspeakable provinces, is not all Loyalty akin to religious Faith also? Faith is loyalty to some inspired Teacher, some spiritual Hero. And what therefore is loyalty proper, the life-breath of all society, but an effluence of Hero-worship, submissive admiration for the truly great? Society is founded on

Hero-worship. All dignities of rank, on which human association rests, are what we may call a *Heroarchy* (Government of Heroes),—or a Hierarchy, for it is 'sacred' enough withal! The Duke means Dux, Leader; King is Könning. Kan-ning, Man that knows or cans. Society everywhere is some representation, not insupportably inaccurate. of a graduated Worship of Heroes;—reverence and obedience done to men really great and wise. Not insupportably inaccurate. I say! They are all as bank-notes, these social dignitaries, all representing gold;—and several of them, alas, always are forged notes. We can do with some forged false notes; with a good many even; but not with all, or the most of them forged! No: there have to come revolutions then; cries of Democracy. Liberty. and Equality, and I know not what:—the notes being all false, and no gold to be had for them, people take to crying in their despair that there is no gold, that there never was any!—'Gold,' Hero-worship is nevertheless, as it was always and everywhere, and cannot cease till man himself ceases.

I am well aware that in these days Hero-worship, the thing I call Hero-worship, professes to have gone out, and finally ceased. This, for reasons which it will be worth while some time to inquire into, is an age that as

it were denies the existence of great men: denies the desirableness of great men. Show our critics a great man, a Luther, for example, they begin to what they call 'account' for him; not to worship him, but take the dimensions of him,—and bring him out to be a little kind of man! He was the 'creature of the Time,' they say: the Time called him forth, the Time did everything, he nothing—but what we the little critic could have done too! This seems to me but melancholy work. The Time calls forth? Alas, we have known Times call loudly enough for their great man; but not find him when they called! He was not there: Providence had not sent him; the Time, calling its loudest, had to go down to confusion and wreck because he would not come when called.

For if we will think of it, no Time need have gone to ruin, could it have found a man great enough, a man wise and good enough: wisdom to discern truly what the Time wanted, valour to lead it on the right road thither; these are the salvation of any Time. But I liken common languid Times, with their unbelief, distress, perplexity, with their languid doubting characters and embarrassed circumstances, impotently crumbling down into ever worse distress towards final ruin;—all this I

liken to dry dead fuel. waiting for the lightning out of Heaven that shall kindle it. The great man. with his free force direct out of God's own hand. is the lightning. His word is the wise healing word which all can believe in. All blazes round him now. when he has once struck on it. into fire like his own. The dry mouldering sticks are thought to have called him forth. They did want him greatly; but as to calling him forth—!—Those are critics of small vision. I think, who cry: "See. is it not the sticks that made the fire?" No sadder proof can be given by a man of his own littleness than disbelief in great men. There is no sadder symptom of a generation than such general blindness to the spiritual lightning. with faith only in the heap of barren dead fuel. It is the last consummation of unbelief. In all epochs of the world's history. we shall find the Great Man to have been the indispensable saviour of his epoch:—the lightning. without which the fuel never would have burnt. The History of the World. I said already. was the Biography of Great Men.

Yes. from Norse Odin to English Samuel Johnson. from the Divine Founder of Christianity to the withered Pontiff of Encyclopædism, in all times and places. the Hero has been worshipped. It will ever be so. We all



love great men; love, venerate, and bow down submissive before great men; nay, can we honestly bow down to anything else? Ah, does not every true man feel that he is himself made higher by doing reverence to what is really above him? No nobler or more blessed feeling dwells in man's heart.

—*Heroes and Hero-Worship*

## XVIII

### THE STRUGGLE FOR EXISTENCE

CHARLES DARWIN

MANY cases are on record showing how complex and unexpected are the checks and relations between organic beings which have to struggle together in the same country. I will give only a single instance, which, though a simple one, has interested me. In Staffordshire, on the estate of a relation, where I had ample means of investigation, there was a large and extremely barren heath, which had never been touched by the hand of man; but several hundred acres of exactly the same nature had been enclosed twenty-five years previously and planted with Scotch fir. The change in the native vegetation of the planted part of the heath was most remarkable, more than generally seen in passing from one quite different soil to another: not only the proportional numbers of the heath-plants were wholly changed, but twelve species of plants (not counting grasses and canes) flourished in the plantations, which could not be found on the heath. The effect on the insects must have been still greater, for six insectivorous birds were very

common in the plantation, which were frequented by two or three distinct insectivorous birds. Here we see how powerful has been the effect of the introduction of a single tree, nothing whatever else having been done, with the exception that the land had been enclosed, so that cattle could not enter. But how important an element enclosure is, I plainly saw near Farnham, in Surrey. Here there are extensive heaths, with a few clumps of old Scotch firs on the distant hill-tops: within the last ten years large spaces have been enclosed and self-sown firs are now springing up in multitudes, so close together that all cannot live. When I ascertained that these young trees had not been sown or planted, I was so much surprised at their numbers that I went to several points of view, whence I could examine hundreds of acres of the unenclosed heath, and literally I could not see a single Scotch fir, except the old planted clumps. But on looking closely between the stems of the heath, I found a multitude of seedlings and little trees, which had been perpetually browsed down by the cattle. In one square yard at a point some hundred yards distant from one of the old clumps, I counted thirty-two little trees; and one of them, with twenty-six rings of growth, had during many years tried to raise its head above the stems of the

heath, and had failed. No wonder that, as soon as the land was enclosed, it became thickly clothed with vigorously growing young firs. Yet the heath was so extremely barren and so extensive that no one would ever have imagined that cattle would have so closely and effectually searched it for food.

Here we see that cattle absolutely determine the existence of the Scotch fir; but in several parts of the world insects determine the existence of cattle. Perhaps Paraguay offers the most curious instance of this; for here neither cattle nor horses nor dogs have ever run wild, though they swarm southward and northward in a wild state; and it has been proved that this is caused by the greater number of a certain fly in Paraguay, which lays its eggs on the navels of these animals when first born. The increase of these flies, numerous as they are, must be habitually checked by some means, probably by birds. Hence, if certain insectivorous birds (whose numbers are probably regulated by hawks or beasts of prey) were to increase in Paraguay, the flies would decrease—then cattle and horses would become wild, and this would certainly greatly alter (as indeed I have observed in certain parts of South America) the vegetation: this again would largely affect the insects: and this, as we

have just seen in Staffordshire, the insectivorous birds, and so on, the relations and changes becoming more and more complicated. We began with insectivorous birds and we have ended with them. Not that in nature the relations can ever be as simple as this. Battle within battle must ever be recurring with varying success; and yet in the long run the forces are so nicely balanced that the face of nature remains uniform for long periods of time, though assuredly the merest trifle would often give the victory to one organic being over another. Nevertheless, so profound is our ignorance, and so high our presumption, that we marvel when we hear of the extinction of an organic being; and as we do not see the cause, we attribute such a disappearance to some general disaster that has overtaken the world, or invent laws on the duration of the forms of life.

I am tempted to give one more instance showing how plants and animals, most remote in nature, are linked together by a series of complex relations. I shall hereafter have occasion to show that the exotic *Lobelia fulgens*, in this part of England, is never visited by insects, and consequently from its peculiar structure, never can set a seed. Many of the orchids absolutely require the visits of the moths to remove their pollen masses.

and thus to fertilise them. From experiments which I have lately tried, I have found that the visits of bees are necessary for the fertilisation of some kinds of clover; but humble-bees alone visit the red clover (*Trifolium pratense*), as other bees cannot reach the nectar. Hence I have very little doubt, that if the whole genus of humble-bees became extinct or very rare in England, the red clover would become very rare, or wholly disappear. The number of humble-bees in any district depends in a great degree on the number of field-mice, which destroy their combs and nests; and Col. Newman, who has long attended to the habits of humble-bees, believes that "more than two-thirds of them are thus destroyed all over England." Now the number of mice is largely dependent, as everyone knows, on the number of cats; and Col. Newman says, "Near villages and small towns I have found nests of humble-bees more numerous than elsewhere, which I attribute to the number of cats that destroy the mice?" Hence it is quite credible that the presence of a feline animal in large numbers in a district might determine, through the intervention first of mice and then of bees, the frequency of certain flowers in that district!

—*Origin of Species*

## XIX

### THE ACQUITTAL OF THE BISHOPS

LORD MACAULAY

It was dark before the jury retired to consider of their verdict. The night was a night of intense anxiety. Some letters are extant which were despatched during that period of suspense, and which have therefore an interest of a peculiar kind. 'It is very late,' wrote the Papal Nuncio; 'and the decision is not yet known. The Judges and the culprits have gone to their own homes. The jury remain together. To-morrow we shall learn the event of *this great struggle.*'

The solicitor for the Bishops sate up all night with a body of servants on the stairs leading to the room where the jury was consulting. It was absolutely necessary to watch the officers who watched the doors: for those officers were supposed to be in the interest of the Crown, and might, if not carefully observed, have furnished a courtly juryman with food, which would have enabled him to starve out the other eleven. Strict guard was therefore kept. Not even a candle to light a pipe was permitted to enter. Some basins of water for washing were suffered to pass at about four in the morning. The

jurymen. raging with thirst, soon lapped up the whole. Great numbers of people walked the neighbouring streets till dawn. Every hour a messenger came from Whitehall to know what was passing. Voices, high in altercation, were repeatedly heard within the room; but nothing certain was known.

At first nine were for acquitting and three for convicting. Two of the minority soon gave way; but Arnold was obstinate. Thomas Austin, a country gentleman of great estate, who had paid close attention to the evidence and speeches, and had taken full notes, wished to argue the question. Arnold declined. He was not used, he doggedly said, to reasoning and debating. His conscience was not satisfied; and he should not acquit the Bishops. 'If you come to that,' said Austin, 'look at me. I am the largest and strongest of the twelve; and before I find such a petition as this a libel, here I will stay till I am no bigger than a tobacco pipe.' It was six in the morning before Arnold yielded. It was soon known that the jury were agreed: but what the verdict would be was still a secret.

At ten the Court again met. The crowd was greater than ever. The jury appeared in their box; and there was a breathless stillness.



Sir Samuel Astry spoke, 'Do you find the defendants, or any of them, guilty of the misdemeanour whereof they are impeached, or not guilty?' Sir Roger Langley answered, 'Not guilty.' As the words passed his lips, Halifax sprang up and waved his hat. At that signal, benches and galleries raised a shout. In a moment ten thousand persons, who crowded the great hall, replied with a still louder shout which made the old oaken roof crack; and in another moment the innumerable throng without set up a third huzza, which was heard at Temple Bar.

The boats which covered the Thames gave an answering cheer. A peal of gunpowder was heard on the water, and another, and another, and so, in a few moments, the glad tidings went flying past the Savoy and the Friars to London Bridge, and to the forest of masts below. As the news spread, streets and squares, market places and coffee-houses, broke forth into acclamations. Yet were the acclamations less strange than the weeping. For the feelings of men had been wound up to such a point that at length the stern English nature, so little used to outward signs of emotions, gave way, and thousands sobbed aloud for very joy.

Meanwhile, from the outskirts of the multitude, horsemen were spurring off to bear along all the great roads intelligence of the victory of our Church and nation. Yet not even that astounding explosion could awe the bitter and intrepid spirit of the Solicitor. Striving to make himself heard above the din, he called on the judges to commit those who had violated, by clamour, the dignity of a Court of justice. One of the rejoicing populace was seized. But the tribunal felt that it would be absurd to punish a single individual for an offence common to hundreds of thousands. and dismissed him with a gentle reprimand.

It was vain to think of passing at that moment to any other business. Indeed the roar of the multitude was such that, for half an hour, scarcely a word could be heard in court. Williams got to his coach amidst a tempest of hisses and curses. Cartwright, whose curiosity was ungovernable. had been guilty of the folly and indecency of coming to Westminster in order to hear the decision. He was recognised by his sacerdotal garb, and by his corpulent figure, and was hooted through the hall. 'Take care.' said one. 'of the wolf in sheep's clothing.'

The acquitted prelates took refuge from the crowd

which implored their blessing in the nearest chapel where divine service was performing. Many churches were open on that morning throughout the capital: and many pious persons repaired thither. The bells of all the parishes of the city and liberties were ringing. The jury meanwhile could scarcely make their way out of the hall. They were forced to shake hands with hundreds. 'God bless you,' cried the people: 'God prosper your families; you have done like honest good-natured gentlemen; you have saved us all to-day.' As the noblemen who had appeared to support the good cause drove off, they flung from their carriage windows handfuls of money, and bade the crowd drink to the health of the King, the Bishops, and the jury.

The Attorney went with the tidings to Sunderland, who happened to be conversing with the Nuncio. 'Never,' said Powis, 'within man's memory have there been such shouts and such tears of joy as to-day.' The King had that morning visited the camp on Hounslow Heath. Sunderland instantly sent courier thither with the news. James was in Lord Feversham's tent when the express arrived. He was greatly disturbed, and exclaimed in French, 'So much the worse for them.' He soon set out for London. While he was present, respect

prevented the soldiers from giving a loose to their feelings; but he had scarcely quitted the camp when he heard a great shouting behind him. He was surprised, and asked what that uproar meant. 'Nothing,' was the answer: 'the soldiers are glad that the Bishops are acquitted.' 'Do you call that nothing?' said James. And then he repeated, 'So much the worse for them.'

He might well be out of temper. His defeat had been complete and most humiliating. Had the prelates escaped on account of some technical defect in the case for the Crown. had they escaped because they had not written the petition in Middlesex, or because it was impossible to prove, according to the strict rules of law, that they had delivered to the King the paper for which they were called in question, the prerogative would have suffered no shock.

Happily for the country, the fact of publication had been fully established. The counsel for the defence had therefore been forced to attack the dispensing power. They had attacked it with great learning, eloquence, and boldness. The advocates of the government had been by universal acknowledgment overmatched in the contest. Not a single judge had ventured to declare that the Declaration of Indulgence was legal. One judge had in

the strongest terms pronounced it illegal. The language of the whole town was that the dispensing power had received a fatal blow. Finch, who had the day before been universally reviled, was now universally applauded. He had been unwilling, it was said, to let the case be decided in a way which would have left the great constitutional question still doubtful. He had felt that a verdict which should acquit his clients, without condemning the Declaration of Indulgence, would be but half a victory. It is certain that Finch deserved neither the reproaches which had been cast on him while the event was doubtful, nor the praises which he received when it had proved happy. It was absurd to blame him because, during the short delay which he occasioned, the Crown lawyers unexpectedly discovered new evidence. It was equally absurd to suppose that he deliberately exposed his client to risk, in order to establish a general principle: and still more absurd was it to praise him for what would have been a gross violation of professional duty.

That joyful day was followed by a not less joyful night. The Bishops, and some of their most respectable friends, in vain exerted themselves to prevent tumultuous demonstrations of joy. Never within the memory of the

oldest, not even on that morning on which it was known through London that the army of Scotland had declared for a free Parliament. had the streets been in such a glare with bonfires. Round every bonfire crowds were drinking good health to the Bishops and confusion to the Papists. The windows were lighted with rows of candles. Each row consisted of seven; and the taper in the centre, which was taller than the rest, represented the Primate.

The noise of rockets, squibs, and firearms, was incessant. One huge pile of faggots blazed right in front of the great gate of Whitehall. Others were lighted before the doors of Roman Catholic Peers. Lord Arundell of Wardour wisely quieted the mob with a little money: but at Salisbury House in the Strand an attempt at resistance was made. Lord Salisbury's servants sallied out and fired: but they killed only the unfortunate beadle of the parish, who had come thither to put out the fire; and they were soon routed and driven back into the house.

Meanwhile the glad tidings were flying to every part of the kingdom, and were everywhere received with rapture. Gloucester, Bedford, and Lichfield, were among the places which were distinguished by peculiar zeal: but

Bristol and Norwich, which stood nearest to London in population and wealth, approached nearest to London in enthusiasm on this joyful occasion.

—*History of England*

## XX PORTRAIT OF A GENTLEMAN

CARDINAL NEWMAN

HENCE it is that it is almost a definition of a gentleman to say he is one who never inflicts pain. This description is both refined and, as far as it goes, accurate. He is mainly occupied in merely removing the obstacles which hinder the free and unembarrassed action of those about him: and he concurs with their movements rather than takes the initiative himself. His benefits may be considered as parallel to what are called comforts or conveniences in arrangements of a personal nature; like an easy chair or good fire which do their part in dispelling cold and fatigue, though nature provides both means of rest and animal heat without them. The true gentleman in like manner carefully avoids whatever may cause a jar or a jolt in the minds of those with whom he is cast:—all clashing of opinion, or collision of feeling, all restraint, or suspicion, or gloom, or resentment; his great concern being to make everyone at their ease and at home. He has his eyes on all his company: he is tender towards the bashful, gentle towards the distant, and merciful towards the absurd: he can recollect to whom he is speaking: he guards against unseasonable



allusions, or topics which may irritate; he is seldom prominent in conversation, and never wearisome. He makes light of favours while he does them. and seems to be receiving when he is conferring. He never speaks of himself except when compelled, never defends himself by a mere retort, he has no ears for slander or gossip, is scrupulous in imputing motives to those who interfere with him. and interprets everything for the best. He is never mean or little in his disputes. never takes unfair advantage. never mistakes personalities or sharp sayings for arguments. or insinuates evil which he dare not say out. From a long-sighted prudence, he observes the maxim of the ancient sage, that we should ever conduct ourselves towards our enemy as if he were one day to be our friend. He has too much good sense to be affronted at insults, he is too well employed to remember injuries, and too indolent to bear malice. He is patient, forbearing, and resigned, on philosophical principles; he submits to pain, because it is inevitable, to bereavement, because it is irreparable, and to death, because it is his destiny. If he engages in controversy of any kind, his disciplined intellect preserves him from the blundering discourtesy of better, perhaps, but less educated minds: who, like blunt weapons, tear and hack instead

of cutting clean, who mistake the point in argument, waste their strength on trifles, misconceive their adversary, and leave the question more involved than they find it. He may be right or wrong in his opinion, but he is too clear-headed to be unjust; he is as simple as he is forcible, and as brief as he is decisive. Nowhere shall we find greater candour, consideration, indulgence; he throws himself into the minds of his opponents, he accounts for their mistakes. He knows the weakness of human reason as well as its strength, its province and its limits. If he be an unbeliever, he will be too profound and large-minded to ridicule religion or to act against it; he is too wise to be a dogmatist or fanatic in his infidelity. He respects piety and devotion; he even supports institutions as venerable, beautiful, or useful, to which he does not assent; he honours the ministers of religion, and it contents him to decline its mysteries without assailing or denouncing them. He is a friend of religious toleration, and that, not only because his philosophy has taught him to look on all forms of faith with an impartial eye, but also from the gentleness and effeminacy of feeling, which is the attendant on civilization.

—*The Scope and Nature of University*

*Education*

## XXI A BULLY SERVED OUT

GEORGE BORROW

AMONGST the coachmen who frequented the inn was one who was called "the bang-up coachman." He drove to our inn, in the fore part of every day, one of what were called the fast coaches, and afterwards took back the corresponding vehicle. He stayed at our house about twenty minutes, during which time the passengers of the coach which he was to return with dined; those at least who were inclined for dinner, and could pay for it. He derived his sobriquet of "the bang-up coachman" partly from his being dressed in the extremity of coach dandyism, and partly from the peculiar insolence of his manner, and the unmerciful fashion in which he was in the habit of lashing on the poor horses committed to his charge. He was a large tall fellow of about thirty, with a face which, had it not been bloated by excess, and insolence and cruelty stamped most visibly upon it, might have been called good-looking. His insolence indeed was so great that he was hated by all the minor fry connected with coaches along the road upon which he drove.

especially the ostlers, whom he was continually abusing or finding fault with. Many were the hearty curses which he received when his back was turned; but the generality of people were much afraid of him, for he was a swinging strong fellow, and had the reputation of being a fighter, and in one or two instances had beaten in a barbarous manner individuals who had quarrelled with him.

I was nearly having a fracas with this worthy. One day, after he had been drinking sherry with a sprig, he swaggered into the yard where I happened to be standing; just then a waiter came by carrying upon a tray part of a splendid Cheshire cheese, with a knife, plate, and napkin. Stopping the waiter, the coachman cut with the knife a tolerably large lump out of the very middle of the cheese, stuck it on the end of the knife, and putting it to his mouth nibbled a slight piece off it, and then, tossing the rest away with disdain, flung the knife down upon the tray, motioning the waiter to proceed: "I wish," said I, "you may not want before you die what you have just flung away." whereupon the fellow turned furiously towards me; just then, however, his coach being standing at the door, there was a cry for coachman, so that he was forced to depart, contenting himself for the

present with shaking his fist at me, and threatening to serve me out on the first opportunity; before, however, the opportunity occurred he himself got served out in a most unexpected manner.

The day after this incident he drove his coach to the inn, and after having dismounted and received the contributions of the generality of the passengers, he strutted up, with a cigar in his mouth, to an individual who had come with him, and who had just asked me a question with respect to the direction of a village about three miles off, to which he was going. "Remember the coachman," said the knight of the box to this individual, who was a thin person of about sixty, with a white hat, rather shabby black coat, and buff-coloured trousers, and who held an umbrella and a small bundle in his hand. "If you expect me to give you anything," said he to the coachman, "you are mistaken; I will give you nothing. You have been very insolent to me as I rode behind you on the coach, and have encouraged two or three trumpery fellows, who rode along with you, to cut scurvy jokes at my expense, and now you come to me for money: I am not so poor but I could have given you a shilling had you been civil; as it is, I will give nothing." "Oh! you won't, won't you?" said the coachman; "dear me! I

hope I shan't starve because you won't give me anything—a shilling! why, I could afford to give you twenty if I thought fit. you pauper! civil to you, indeed! things are come to a fine pass if I need be civil to you! Do you know who you are speaking to? why the best lords in the country are proud to speak to me. Why, it was only the other day that the Marquis of . . . said to me . . .,” and then he went on to say what the Marquis said to him; after which, flinging down his cigar, he strutted up the road, swearing to himself about paupers.

“You say it is three miles to . . .,” said the individual to me; “I think I shall light my pipe, and smoke it as I go along.” Thereupon he took out from a side-pocket a tobacco-box and short meerschaum pipe and implements for striking a light, filled his pipe, lighted it, and commenced smoking. Presently the coachman drew near, I saw at once that there was mischief in his eye; the man smoking was standing with his back towards him, and he came so nigh to him, seemingly purposely, that as he passed a puff of smoke came of necessity against his face. “What do you mean by smoking in my face?” said he, striking the pipe of the elderly individual out of his mouth. The other, without manifesting much surprise, said. “I thank you; and if you will

wait a minute, I will give you a receipt for that favour;" then gathering up his pipe, and taking off his coat and hat, he laid them on a stepping-block which stood near, and rubbing his hands together, he advanced towards the coachman in an attitude of offence, holding his hands crossed very near to his face. The coachman, who probably expected anything but such a movement from a person of the age and appearance of the individual whom he had insulted, stood for a moment motionless with surprise; but recollecting himself, he pointed at him derisively with his finger; the next moment, however, the other was close upon him, had struck aside the extended hand with his left fist, and given him a severe blow on the nose with his right, which he immediately followed by a left-hand blow in the eye; then drawing his body slightly backward, with the velocity of lightning he struck the coachman full in the mouth, and the last blow was severest of all, for it cut the coachman's lips nearly through; blows so quickly and sharply dealt I had never seen. The coachman reeled like a fir-tree in a gale, and seemed nearly unsensed. "Ho! what's this? a fight! a fight!" sounded from a dozen voices, and people came running from all directions to see what was going on. The coachman, coming somewhat to himself, disencum-

bered himself of his coat and hat; and, encouraged by two or three of his brothers of the whip, showed some symptoms of fighting. endeavouring to close with his foe. but the attempt was vain, his foe was not to be closed with; he did not sift or dodge about, but warded off the blows of his opponent with the greatest sang-froid. always using the guard which I have already described. and putting in, in return, short chopping blows with the swiftness of lightning. In a few minutes the countenance of the coachman was literally cut to pieces, and several of his teeth were dislodged; at length he gave in; stung with mortification. however, he repented, and asked for another round; it was granted. to his own complete demolition. The coachman did not drive his coach back that day. he did not appear on the box again for a week; but he never held up his head afterwards. Before I quitted the inn. he had disappeared from the road. going no one knew where.

The coachman. as I have said before. was very much disliked upon the road, but there was an *esprit de corps* amongst the coachmen. and those who stood by did not like to see their brother chastised in such tremendous fashion. "I never saw such a fight before." said one. "Fight! why, I don't call it a fight at all, this chap here



ha'n't got a scratch, whereas Tom is cut to pieces: it is all along of that guard of his; if Tom could have got within his guard he would have soon served the old chap out." "So he would," said another, "it was all owing to that guard. However. I think I see into it. and if I had not to drive this afternoon, I would have a turn with the old fellow and soon serve him out." "I will fight him now for a guinea." said the other coachman. half taking off his coat; observing, however, that the elderly individual made a motion towards him, he hitched it upon his shoulder again, and added. "that is. if he had not been fighting already, but as it is. I am above taking an advantage. especially of such a poor old creature as that." And when he had said this, he looked around him. and there was a feeble titter of approbation from two or three of the craven crew. who were in the habit of currying favour with the coachmen. The elderly individual looked for a moment at these last, and then said. "To such fellows as you I have nothing to say:" then turning to the coachmen. "and as for you," he said. "ye cowardly bullies, I have but one word. which is, that your reign upon the roads is nearly over. and that a time is coming when ye will be no longer wanted or employed in your present capacity, when ye will either have to

drive dung-carts, assist as ostlers at village ale-houses, or rot in the workhouse." Then putting on his coat and hat, and taking up his bundle, not forgetting his meerschaum and the rest of his smoking apparatus, he departed on his way. Filled with curiosity, I followed him.

—*The Romany Rye*

XXII  
THE ELEMENTS OF FRIENDSHIP

RALPH WALDO EMERSON

THERE are two elements that go to the composition of friendship, each so sovereign that I can detect no superiority in either, no reason why either should be first named. One is truth. A friend is a person with whom I may be sincere. Before him I may think aloud. I am arrived at last in the presence of a man so real and equal that I may drop even those undermost garments of dissimulation, courtesy, and second thought, which men never put off, and may deal with him with the simplicity and wholeness with which one chemical atom meets another. Sincerity is the luxury allowed, like diadems and authority, only to the highest rank; *that* being permitted to speak truth, as having none above it to court or conform unto. Every man alone is sincere. At the entrance of a second person, hypocrisy begins. We parry and fend the approach of our fellow-man by compliments, by gossip, by amusements, by affairs. We cover up our thought from him under a hundred folds.

I knew a man who under a certain religious frenzy cast off this drapery, and omitting all compliment and commonplace, spoke to the conscience of every person he encountered, and that with great insight and beauty. At first he was resisted, and all men agreed he was mad. But persisting—as indeed he could not help doing—for some time in this course, he attained to the advantage of bringing every man of his acquaintance into true relations with him. No man would think of speaking falsely with him, or of putting him off with any chat of markets or reading-rooms. But every man was constrained by so much sincerity to the like plain-dealing, and what love of nature, what poetry, what symbol of truth he had, he did certainly show him. But to most of us society shows not its face and eye, but its side and its back. To stand in true relations with men in a false age is worth a fit of insanity, is it not? We can seldom go erect. Almost every man we meet requires some civility—requires to be humoured; he has some fame, some talent, some whim of religion or philanthropy in his head that is not to be questioned, and which spoils all conversation with him. But a friend is a same man who exercises not my ingenuity, but me. My friend gives me entertainment without requiring any stipulation on my part. A friend

therefore is a sort of paradox in nature. I who alone am. I who see nothing in nature whose existence I can affirm with equal evidence to my own, behold now the semblance of my being, in all its height, variety and curiosity, reiterated in a foreign form; so that a friend may well be reckoned the masterpiece of nature.

The other element of friendship is tenderness. We are holden to men by every sort of tie, by blood, by pride, by fear, by hope, by lucre, by lust, by hate, by admiration, by every circumstance and badge and trifle.—but we can scarce believe that so much character can subsist in another as to draw us by love. Can another be so blessed and we so pure that we can offer him tenderness? When a man becomes dear to me I have touched the goal of fortune. I find very little written directly to the heart of this matter in books. And yet I have one text which I cannot choose but remember. My author says “I offer myself faintly and bluntly to those whose I effectually am, and tender myself least to him to whom I am the most devoted.” I wish that friendship should have feet, as well as eyes and eloquence. It must plant itself on the ground, before it vaults over the moon. I wish it to be a little of a citizen, before it is quite a cherub. We chide the citizen because

he makes love a commodity. It is an exchange of gifts, of useful loans; it is good neighbourhood; it watches with the sick; it holds the pall at the funeral: and quite loses sight of the delicacies and nobility of the relation. But though we cannot find the god under this disguise of a sutler, yet on the other hand we cannot forgive the poet if he spins his thread too fine and does not substantiate his romance by the municipal virtues of justice, punctuality, fidelity, and pity. I hate the prostitution of the name of friendship to signify modish and worldly alliances. I much prefer the company of ploughboys and tin-pedlers to the silken and perfumed amity which celebrates its days of encounter by a frivolous display, by rides in a curriole and dinners at the best taverns. The end of friendship is a commerce the most strict and homely that can be joined; more strict than any of which we have experience. It is for aid and comfort through all the relations and passages of life and death. It is fit for serene days and graceful gifts and country rambles, but also for rough roads and hard fare, shipwreck, poverty and persecution. It keeps company with the sallies of the wit and the trances of religion. We are to dignify to each other the daily needs and offices of man's life, and embellish it by courage, wisdom and

unity. It should never fall into something usual and settled, but should be alert and inventive and add rhyme and reason to what was drudgery.

—*Essays*

## XXIII

### THE PLACE OF ART IN EDUCATION

JOHN STUART MILL

IF we wish men to practise virtue. it is worth while trying to make them love virtue and feel it an object in itself and not a tax paid for leave to pursue other objects. It is worth training them to feel not only actual wrong or actual meanness. but the absence of noble aims and endeavours. as not merely blamable, but also degrading: to have a feeling of the miserable smallness of mere self in the face of this great universe, of the collective mass of our fellow-creatures, in the face of past history and of the indefinite future—the poorness and insignificance of human life if it is to be all spent in making things comfortable for ourselves and our kin and raising ourselves and them a step or two on the social ladder. Thus feeling, we learn to respect ourselves only so far as we feel capable of nobler objects; and if unfortunately those by whom we are surrounded do not share our aspirations. perhaps disapprove the conduct to which we are prompted by them, to sustain ourselves by



the ideal sympathy of the great characters in history, or even in fiction, and by the contemplation of an idealised posterity: shall I add, of ideal perfection, embodied in a Divine Being? Now, of this elevated tone of mind the great source of inspiration is poetry, and all literature so far as it is poetical and artistic. We may imbibe exalted feelings from Plato or Demosthenes or Tacitus, but it is in so far as those great men are not solely philosophers or orators or historians, but poets and artists. Nor is it only loftiness, only the heroic feelings that are bred by poetic cultivation. Its power is as great in calming the soul as in elevating it—in fostering the milder emotions, as the most exalted. It brings home to us all those aspects of life which take hold of our nature on its unselfish side, and leads us to identify our joy and grief with the good or ill of the system of which we form a part: and all those solemn or pensive feelings which, without having any direct application to conduct, incline us to take life seriously and predispose us to the reception of anything which comes before us in the shape of duty. Who does not feel himself a better man after a course of Dante or of Wordsworth, or, I will add, of Lucretius or the *Georgics*, or after brooding over Gray's 'Elegy' or Shelley's 'Hymn to Intellectual Beauty'?

I have spoken of poetry, but all the other modes of art produce similar effects in their degree. The races and nations whose senses are naturally finer and their sensuous perceptions more exercised than ours receive the same kind of impressions from painting and sculpture; and many of the more delicately organised among ourselves do the same. All the arts of expression tend to keep alive and in activity the feelings they express. Do you think that the great Italian painters would have filled the place they did in the European mind, would have been universally ranked among the greatest men of their time, if their productions had done nothing for it but to serve as the decoration of a public hall or a private *salon*? Their Nativities and Crucifixions, their glorious Madonnas and Saints, were to their susceptible Southern countrymen the great school not only of devotional, but of all the elevated and all the imaginative feelings. We colder Northerners may approach to a conception of this function of art when we listen to an oratorio of Handel or give ourselves up to the emotions excited by a Gothic cathedral. Even apart from any specific emotional expression, the mere contemplation of beauty of a high order produces in no small degree this elevating effect on the character. The power of natural scenery addresses

itself to the same region of human nature which corresponds to Art. There are few capable of feeling the sublimer order of natural beauty, such as your own Highlands and other mountain regions afford, who are not, at least temporarily, raised by it above the littleness of humanity, and made to feel the puerility of the petty objects which set men's interests at variance, contrasted with the nobler pleasures which all might share. To whatever avocations we may be called in life, let us never quash these susceptibilities within us, but carefully seek the opportunities of maintaining them in exercise. The more prosaic our ordinary duties, the more necessary it is to keep up the tone of our minds by frequent visits to that higher region of thought and feeling, in which every work seems dignified in proportion to the ends for which, and the spirit in which, it is done: where we learn, while eagerly seizing every opportunity of exercising higher faculties and performing higher duties, to regard all useful and honest work as a public function, which may be ennobled by the mode of performing it—which has not properly any other nobility than that which it gives—and which, if ever so humble, is never mean but when it is meanly done and when the motives for which it is done are mean motives. There is, besides, a natural affinity

between goodness and the cultivation of the beautiful, when it is real cultivation and not a mere unguided instinct. He who has learnt what beauty is, if he be of a virtuous character, will desire to realise it in his own life —will keep before himself a type of perfect beauty in human character, to light his attempts at self-culture. There is a true meaning in the saying of Goethe, though liable to be misunderstood and perverted, that the Beautiful is greater than the Good; for it includes the Good and adds something to it; it is the Good made perfect, and fitted with all the collateral perfections which make it a finished and completed thing. Now, this sense of perfection, which would make us demand from every creation of man the very utmost that it ought to give, and render us intolerant of the smallest fault in ourselves or in anything we do, is one of the results of Art cultivation. No other human productions come so near to perfection as works of pure Art. In all other things we are, and may reasonably be, satisfied if the degree of excellence is as great as the object immediately in view seems to us to be worth; but in Art the perfection is itself the object. If I were to define Art, I should be inclined to call it the endeavour after perfection in execution. If we meet with even a piece of mechanical

work which bears the marks of being done in this spirit—which is done as if the workman loved it, and tried to make it as good as possible, though something less good would have answered the purpose for which it was ostensibly made—we say that he has worked like an artist. Art, when really cultivated and not merely practised empirically, maintains, what it first gave the conception of, an ideal Beauty, to be eternally aimed at, though surpassing what can be actually attained; and by this idea it trains us never to be completely satisfied with imperfection in what we ourselves do and are; to idealise, as much as possible, every work we do, and most of all our own characters and lives.

—*Inaugural Address at St. Andrews*

## XXIV

### GREATNESS

SIR ARTHUR HELPS

You cannot substitute any epithet for great, when you are talking of great men. Greatness is not general dexterity carried to any extent; nor proficiency in any one subject of human endeavour. There are great astronomers, great scholars, great painters, even great poets, who are very far from great men. Greatness can do without success, and with it. William is greater in his retreats than Marlborough in his victories. On the other hand, the uniformity of Cæsar's success does not dull his greatness. Greatness is not in the circumstances, but in the man.

What does this greatness then consist in? Not in a nice balance of qualities, purposes, and powers. That will make a happy man, a successful man, a man always in his right depth. Nor does it consist in absence of errors. We need only glance back at any list that can be made of great men, to be convinced of that. Neither does greatness consist in energy, though often accom-

panied by it. Indeed, it is rather the breadth of the waters, than the force of the current, that we look to, to fulfil our idea of greatness. There is no doubt that energy acting upon a nature endowed with the qualities that we sum up in the word cleverness, and directed to a few clear purposes, produces a great effect, and may sometimes be mistaken for greatness. If a man is mainly bent upon his own advancement, it cuts many a difficult knot of policy for him, and gives a force and distinctness to his mode of going on which looks grand. The same happens if he has one pre-eminent idea of any kind, even though it should be a narrow one. Indeed, success in life is mostly gained by unity of purpose: whereas greatness often fails by reason of its having manifold purposes, but it does not cease to be greatness on that account.

If greatness can be shut up in qualities, it will be found to consist in courage and in openness of mind and soul. These qualities may not seem at first to be so potent. But see what growth there is in them. The education of a man of open mind is never ended. Then, with openness of soul, a man sees some way into all other souls that come near him, feels with them, has their experience, is in himself a people. Sympathy is the

universal solvent. Nothing is understood without it. The capacity of a man, at least for understanding, may almost be said to vary according to his powers of sympathy. Again, what is there that can counteract selfishness like sympathy? Selfishness may be hedged in by minute watchfulness and self-denial, but it is counteracted by the nature being encouraged to grow out and fix its tendrils upon foreign objects.

The immense defect that want of sympathy is, may be strikingly seen in the failure of the many attempts that have been made in all ages to construct the Christian character, omitting sympathy. It has produced numbers of people walking up and down one narrow plank of self-restraint, pondering over their own merits and demerits, keeping out, not the world exactly, but their fellow-creatures, from their hearts, and caring only to drive their neighbours before them on this plank of theirs, or to push them headlong. Thus with many virtues, and much hard work at the formation of character, we have splendid bigots or censorious small people.

But sympathy is warmth and light too. It is, as it were, the moral atmosphere connecting all animated natures. Putting aside, for a moment, the large differences that opinions, language, and education make



between men, look at the innate diversity of character. Natural philosophers were amazed when they thought they had found a newly-created species. But what is each man but a creature such as the world has not before seen? Then think how they pour forth in multitudinous masses, from princes delicately nurtured to little boys on scrubby commons or in dark cellars. How are these people to be understood, to be taught to understand, each other, but by those who have the deepest sympathies with all? There cannot be a great man without large sympathy. There may be men who play loud-sounding parts in life without it, as on the stage, where kings and great people sometimes enter, who are only characters of secondary import—deputy great men. But the interest and the instruction lie with those who have to feel and suffer most.

Add courage to this openness we have been considering: and you have a man who can own himself in the wrong, can forgive, can trust, can adventure, can, in short, use all the means that insight and sympathy endow him with.

I see no other essential characteristics in the greatness of nations than there are in the greatness of individuals. Extraneous circumstances largely influence

nations as individuals; and make a larger part of the show of the former than of the latter; as we are wont to consider no nation great that is not great in extent or resources as well as in character. But of two nations, equal in other respects, the superiority must belong to the one which excels in courage and openness of mind and soul.

Again, in estimating the relative merits of different periods of the world, we must employ the same tests of greatness that we use to individuals. To compare, for instance, the present and the past. What astounds us most in the past is the wonderful intolerance and cruelty: a cruelty constantly turning upon the inventors: and intolerance provoking ruin to the thing it would foster. The most admirable precepts are thrown from time to time upon this cauldron of human affairs, and oftentimes they only seem to make it blaze the higher. We find men devoting the best part of their intellects to the invariable annoyance and persecution of their fellows. You might think that the earth brought forth with more abundant fruitfulness in the past than now, seeing that men found so much time for cruelty, but that you read of famines and privations which these latter days cannot equal. The recorded violent deaths amount to millions.

And this is but a small part of the matter. Consider the modes of justice, the use of torture, for instance. What must have been the blinded state of the wise persons (wise for their day), who used torture. Did they ever think themselves 'what should we not say if we were subjected to this?' Many times they must really have desired to get at the truth: and such was their mode of doing it. Now, at the risk of being thought 'a laudator' of time present, I would say, here is the element of greatness we have made progress in. We are more open in mind and soul. We have arrived (some of us at least) at the conclusion that men may honestly differ without offence. We have learned to pity each other more. There is a greatness in modern toleration which our ancestors knew not.

Then comes the other element of greatness, courage. Have we made progress in that? This is a much more dubious question. The subjects of terror vary so much in different times that it is difficult to estimate the different degrees of courage shown in resisting them. Men fear public opinion now as they did in former times the star-chamber: and those awful goddesses. Appearances, are to us what the Fates were to the Greeks. It is hardly possible to measure the courage of a modern

against that of an ancient: but I am unwilling to believe but that enlightenment must strengthen courage.

The application of the tests of greatness, as in the above instance, is a matter of detail, and of nice appreciation. as to the results of which men must be expected to differ largely: the tests themselves remain invariable—openness of nature to admit the light of love and reason, and courage to pursue it.

—*Friends in Council*

XXV  
MY OLD VILLAGE

RICHARD JEFFERIES

"JOHN BROWN is dead," said an aged friend and visitor in answer to my inquiry for the strong labourer.

"Is he really dead?" I asked. for it seemed impossible.

"He is. He came home from his work in the evening as usual, and seemed to catch his foot in the threshold and fell forward on the floor. When they picked him up he was dead."

I remember the doorway; a raised piece of wood ran across it, as is commonly the case in country cottages. such as one might easily catch one's foot against if one did not notice it; but he knew that bit of wood well. The floor was of brick, hard to fall on and die. He must have come down over the crown of the hill, with his long slouching stride, as if his legs had been half pulled away from his body by his heavy boots in the furrows. when a ploughboy. He must have turned up the steps in the bank to his cottage, and so, touching the threshold, ended. He is gone through the great doorway, and one

pencil-mark is rubbed out. There used to be a large hearth in that room, a larger room than in most cottages; and when the fire was lit, and the light shone on the yellowish-red brick beneath and the rafters overhead, it was homely and pleasant. In summer the door was always wide open. Close by on the high bank there was a spot where the first wild violets came. You might look along miles of hedgerow, but there were never any until they had shown by John Brown's. If a man's work that he has done all the days of his life could be collected and piled up around him in visible shape, what a vast mound there would be beside some! If each act or stroke was represented, say by a brick, John Brown would have stood the day before his ending by the side of a monument as high as a pyramid. Then if in front of him could be placed the sum and product of his labour, the profit to himself, he could have held it in his clenched hand like a nut, and no one would have seen it. Our modern people think they train their sons to strength by football and rowing and jumping, and what are called athletic exercises; all of which it is the fashion now to preach as very noble, and likely to lead to the goodness of the race. Certainly feats are accomplished and records are beaten, but there is no real strength gained,

no hardihood built up. Without hardihood it is of little avail to be able to jump an inch farther than somebody else. Hardihood is the true test, hardihood is the ideal, and not these caperings or ten minutes' spurts.

Now, the way they made the boy John Brown hardy was to let him roll about on the ground with naked legs and bare head from morn till night, from June till December, from January till June. The rain fell on his head, and he played in wet grass to his knees. Dry bread with a little lard was his chief food. He went to work while he was still a child. At half-past three in the morning he was on his way to the farm stables, there to help feed the cart horses, which used to be done with great care very early in the morning. The carter's whip used to sting his legs, and sometimes he felt the butt. At fifteen he was no taller than the sons of well-to-do people at eleven; he scarcely seemed to grow at all till he was eighteen or twenty, and even then very slowly, but at last became a tall big man. That slouching walk, with knees always bent, diminished his height to appearance: he really was the full size, and every inch of his frame had been slowly welded together by this ceaseless work, continual life in the open air, and coarse hard food. This is what makes a man hardy.

This is what makes a man able to stand almost anything, and gives a power of endurance that can never be obtained by any amount of gymnastic training.

I used to watch him mowing with amazement. Sometimes he would begin at half-past two in the morning and continue till night. About eleven o'clock, which used to be the mowers' noon, he took a rest on a couch of half-dried grass in the shade of the hedge. For the rest, it was mow, mow for the long summer day.

John Brown was dead: died in an instant at his cottage door. I could hardly credit it, so vivid was the memory of his strength. The gap of time since I had seen him last had made no impression on me; to me he was still in my mind the John Brown of the hay field; there was nothing between then and his death.

He used to catch us boys the bats in the stable and tell us fearful tales of the ghosts he had seen; and bring the bread from the town in an old-fashioned wallet, half in front and half behind, long before the bakers' carts began to come round in country places. Of later days they say he worked in the town a good deal, and did not look so well or so happy as on the farm. In this cottage opposite the violet bank they had small-pox once, the only case I recollect in the hamlet—the old men



used to say everybody had it when they were young; this was the only case in my time, and they recovered quickly without any loss, nor did the disease spread. A roomy well-built cottage like that, on dry ground, isolated, is the only hospital worthy of the name. People have a chance to get well in such places; they have very great difficulty in the huge buildings that are put up expressly for them. I have a Convalescent Home in my mind at the moment, a vast building. In these great blocks what they call ventilation is a steady draught, and there is no "home" about it. It is all walls and regulations and draughts, and altogether miserable. I would infinitely rather see any friend of mine in John Brown's cottage. That terrible disease, however, seemed quite to spoil the violet bank opposite, and I never picked one there afterwards. There is something in disease so destructive, as it were, to flowers.

The hundreds of times I saw the tall chimney of that cottage rise out of the hill-side as I came home at all hours of the day and night! the first chimney after a long journey, always comfortable to see, especially so in earlier days, when we had a kind of halting belief in John Brown's ghosts, several of which were dotted along that road according to him. The ghosts die as we

grow older they die and their places are taken by real ghosts. I wish I had sent John Brown a pound or two when I was in good health; but one is selfish then, and puts off things till it is too late—a lame excuse verily. I can scarcely believe now that he is really dead, gone as you might casually pluck a hawthorn leaf from the hedge.

The next cottage was a very marked one, for houses grow to their owners. The low thatched roof had rounded itself and stooped down to fit itself to Job's shoulders: the walls had got short and thick to suit him, and they had a yellowish colour, like his complexion, as if chewing tobacco had stained his cheeks right through. Tobacco juice had likewise penetrated and tinted the wall. It was cut off as it seemed by a party-wall into one room, instead of which there were more rooms beyond which no one would have suspected. Job had a way of shaking hands with you with his right hand, while his left hand was casually doing something else in a detached sort of way. "Yes, sir," and "No, sir," and nodding to everything you said all so complaisant, but at the end of the bargain you generally found yourself in some roundabout manner a few shillings on the wrong side. Job had a lot of shut-up rooms in his house and in his

character, which never seemed to be opened to daylight. The eaves hung over and beetled like his brows, and he had a forelock, a regular antique forelock, which he used to touch with the greatest humility. There was a long bough of an elm hanging over one gable just like the forelock. His face was a blank, like the broad end wall of the cottage, which had no window—at least you might think so until you looked up and discovered one little arrow slit, one narrow pane, and woke with a start to the idea that Job was always up there watching and listening. That was how he looked out of his one eye so intensely cunning, the other being a wall eye—that is, the world supposed so, as he kept it half shut, always between the lights; but whether it was really blind or not I cannot say. Job caught rats and rabbits and moles, and bought faggots, or potatoes, or fruit, or rabbit-skins, or rusty iron; wonderful how he seemed to have command of money. It was done probably by buying and selling almost simultaneously, so that the cash passed really from one customer to another, and was never his at all. Also he worked as a labourer, chiefly piecework; also Mrs. Job had a shop-window about two feet square: snuff and tobacco, bread and cheese, immense big round jumbles and sugar, kept on the floor above, and reached down

by hand, when wanted, through the opening for the ladder stairs. The front door—Job's right hand—was always open in summer. and the flagstones of the floor chalked round their edges; a clean table, clean chairs. decent crockery. an old clock about an hour slow, a large hearth with a minute fire to boil the kettle without heating the room. Tea was usually at half-past three. and it is a fact that many well-to-do persons. as they came along the road hot and dusty, used to drop in and rest and take a cup—very little milk and much gossip. Two paths met just there, and people used to step in out of a storm of rain. a sort of thatched house club. Job was somehow on fair terms with nearly everybody. and that is a wonderful thing in a village, where everybody knows everybody's business, and petty interests continually cross. The strangest fellow and the strangest way of life, and yet I do not believe a black mark was ever put against him; the shiftiness was all for nothing. It arose, no doubt, out of the constant and eager straining to gain a little advantage and make an extra penny. Had Job been a Jew he would have been rich. He was the exact counterpart of the London Jew dealer, set down in the midst of the country. Job should have been rich. Such immense dark brown jumbles, such cheek-distenders

—never any French sweetmeats or chocolate or bonbons to equal these. I really think I could eat one now. The pennies and fourpenny-bits—there were fourpenny-bits in those days—that went behind that two-foot window, goodness! there was no end. Job used to chink them in a pint pot sometimes before the company, to give them an idea of his great hoards. He always tried to impress people with his wealth, and would talk of a fifty-pound contract as if it was nothing to him. Jumbles are eternal, if nothing else is. I thought then there was not such another shop as Job's in the universe. I have found since that there is a Job shop in every village, and in every street in every town—that is to say, a window for jumbles and rubbish; and if you don't know it, you may be quite sure your children do, and spend many a sly penny there. Be as rich as you may, and give them gilded sweetmeats at home, still they will slip round to the Job shop.

It was a pretty cottage, well backed with trees and bushes with a south-east mixture of sunlight and shade, and little touches that cannot be suggested by writing. Job had not got the Semitic instinct of keeping. The art of acquisition he possessed to some extent, that was his right hand; but somehow the half-crowns slipped

away through his unstable left hand, and fortune was a greasy pole to him. His left hand was too cunning for him, it wanted to manage things too cleverly. If it had only had the Semitic grip, digging the nails into the flesh to hold tight each separate coin, he would have been village rich. The great secret is the keeping. Finding is by no means keeping. Job did not flourish in his old days: the people changed round about. Job is gone, and I think every one of that cottage is either dead or moved.

The next cottage was the water-bailiff's, who looked after the great pond or "broad." There were one or two old boats, and he used to leave the oars leaning against a wall at the side of the house. These oars looked like fragments of a wreck, broken and irregular. The right-hand scull was heavy, as if made of ironwood, the blade broad and spoon-shaped, so as to have a most powerful grip of the water. The left-hand scull was light and slender, with a narrow blade like a marrow scoop: so when you had the punt, you had to pull very hard with your left hand and gently with the right to get the forces equal. The punt had a list of its own, and no matter how you rowed, it would still make leeway. Those who did not know its character were perpetually

trying to get this crooked wake straight, and consequently went round and round exactly like the whirligig beetle. Those who knew used to let the leeway proceed a good way and then alter it, so as to act in the other direction like an elongated zigzag. These sculls the old fellow would bring you as if they were great treasures, and watch you off in the punt as if he was parting with his dearest. At that date it was no little matter to coax him round to unchain his vessel. You had to take an interest in the garden, in the baits, and the weather, and be very humble; then perhaps he would tell you he did not want it for the trimmers, or the withy, or the flags, and you might have it for an hour as far as he could see; "did not think my lord's steward would come over that morning; of course, if he did you must come in," and so on; and if the stars were propitious, by and by the punt was got afloat. These sculls were tilted up against the wall, and as you innocently went to take one. Wauw!—a dirty little ill-tempered mongrel poodle rolled himself like a ball to your heels and snapped his teeth—Wauw! At the bark, out rushed the old lady, his housekeeper, shouting in the shrillest key to the dog to lie still, and to you that the bailiff would be there in a minute. At the sound of her shrewish "yang-yang"

down came the old man from the bank, and so one dog fetched out the lot. The three were exactly alike somehow. Beside these diamond skulls he had a big gun, with which he used to shoot the kingfishers that came for the little fish; the number he slaughtered was very great; he persecuted them as Domitian did the flies: he declared that a kingfisher would carry off a fish heavier than itself. Also he shot rooks, once now and then strange wild-fowl with this monstrous iron pipe, and something happened with this gun one evening which was witnessed, and after that the old fellow was very benevolent, and the punt was free to one or two who knew all about it. There is an old story about the stick that would not beat the dog, and the dog would not bite the pig, and so on; and so I am quite sure that ill-natured cur could never have lived with that "yang-yang" shrew, nor could any one else but he have turned the gear of the hatch, nor have endured the dog and the woman, and the constant miasma from the stagnant waters. No one else could have shot anything with that cumbrous weapon, and no one else could row that punt straight. He used to row it quite straight, to the amazement of a wondering world, and somehow supplied the motive force—the stick—which kept all these things going. He is gone, and, I think,



the housekeeper too, and the house has had several occupants since, who have stamped down the old ghosts and thrust them out of doors.

After this the cottages and houses came in little groups, some up crooked lanes, hidden away by elms as if out of sight in a cupboard, and some dotted along the brooks, scattered so that, unless you had connected them all with a very long rope, no stranger could have told which belonged to the village and which did not. They drifted into various tithings, and yet it was all the same place. They were all thatched. It was a thatched village. This is strictly accurate and strictly inaccurate, for I think there were one or two tiled, and perhaps a modern one slated. Nothing is ever quite rigid or complete that is of man; all rules have a chip in them. The way they built the older thatched farm-houses was to put up a very high wall in front and a very low one behind, and then the roof in a general way sloped down from the high wall to the low wall, an acre broad of thatch. These old thatched houses seemed to be very healthy so long as the old folk lived in them in the old-fashioned way. Thatch is believed to give an equable temperature. The air blew all round them, and it might be said all through them; for the front door was always open three parts of

the year. and at the back the daisies were in a continual blow. Upstairs the houses were only one room thick. so that each wall was an outside wall. or rather, it was a wall one side and thatched the other, so that the wind went through if a window was open. Modern houses are often built two rooms thick. so that the air does not circulate from one side to the other. No one seemed to be ill, unless he brought it home with him from some place where he had been visiting. The diseases they used to have were long-lived. such as rheumatism, which may keep a man comfortably in aches and pains forty years. My dear old friend. however. taking them one by one. went through the lot and told me of the ghosts. The forefathers I knew are all gone—the stout man, the lame man. the paralyzed man. the gruff old stick: not one left of the old farmers, not a single one. The fathers. too. of our own generation have been dropping away. The strong young man who used to fill us with such astonishment at the feats he would achieve without a thought. and with no gymnastic training, to whom a sack of wheat was a toy. The strong young man went one day into the harvest field, as he had done so many times before. Suddenly he felt a little dizzy. By and by he went home and became very ill with sunstroke: he recovered. but

he was never strong again; he gradually declined for twelve months, and next harvest-time he was under the daisies. Just one little touch of the sun, and the strength of man faded as a leaf. The hardy dark young man, built of iron, broad, thick, and short, who looked as if frost, snow, and heat were all the same to him, had something go wrong in his lung: one twelvemonth, and there was an end. This was a very unhappy affair. The pickaxe and the spade have made almost a full round to every door: I do not want to think any more about this. Family changes and the pressure of these hard times have driven out most of the rest: some seem to have gone quite out of sight; some have crossed the sea; some have abandoned the land as a livelihood. Of the few, the very few that still remain, still fewer abide in their original homes. Time has shuffled them about from house to house like a pack of cards. Of them all, I verily believe there is but one soul living in the same old house. If the French had landed in the mediæval way to harry with fire and sword, they could not have swept the place more clean.

Almost the first thing I did with pen and ink as a boy was to draw a map of the hamlet with the roads and lanes and paths, and I think some of the ponds, and with

each of the houses marked and the occupier's name. Of course, it was very roughly done, and not to any scale, yet it was perfectly accurate and full of detail. I wish I could find it, but the confusion of time has scattered and mixed these early papers. A map by Ptolemy would bear as much resemblance to the same country in a modern atlas as mine to the present state of that locality. It is all gone—rubbed out. The names against the whole of those houses have been altered, one only excepted, and changes have taken place there. Nothing remains. This is not in a century, half a century, or even in a quarter of a century, but in a few ticks of the clock.

I think I have heard that the oaks are down. They may be standing or down, it matters nothing to me; the leaves I last saw upon them are gone for evermore, nor shall I ever see them come there again ruddy in spring. I would not see them again even if I could; they could never look again as they used to do. There are too many memories there. The happiest days become the saddest afterwards; let us never go back, lest we too die. There are no such oaks anywhere else, none so tall and straight, and with such massive heads, on which the sun used to shine as if on the globe of the earth, one side in shadow, the other in bright light. How often I have looked at

oaks since, and yet have never been able to get the same effect from them! Like an old author printed in another type, the words are the same, but the sentiment is different. The brooks have ceased to run. There is no music now at the old hatch where we used to sit in danger of our lives, happy as kings, on the narrow bar over the deep water. The barred pike that used to come up in such numbers are no more among the flags. The perch used to drift down the stream, and then bring up again. The sun shone there for a very long time, and the water rippled and sang, and it always seemed to me that I could feel the rippling and the singing and the sparkling back through the centuries. The brook is dead, for when man goes nature ends. I dare say there is water there still, but it is not the brook: the brook is gone like John Brown's soul. There used to be clouds over the fields, white clouds in blue summer skies. I have lived a good deal on clouds; they have been meat to me often: they bring something to the spirit which even the trees do not. I see clouds now sometimes when the iron grip of pain permits for a minute or two: they are very different clouds, and speak differently. I long for some of the old clouds that had no memories. There were nights in those times over those fields, not darkness, but Night.

full of glowing suns and glowing richness of life that sprang up to meet them. The nights are there still; they are everywhere, nothing local in the night; but it is not the Night to me seen through the window.

There used to be footpaths. Following one of them, the first field always had a good crop of grass; over the next stile there was a great oak standing alone in the centre of the field. generally a great cart horse under it, and a few rushes scattered about the furrows; the fourth was always full of the finest clover; in the fifth you could scent the beans on the hill, and there was a hedge like a wood. and a nest of the long-tailed tit; the sixth had a runnel and blue forget-me-nots; the seventh had a brooklet and scattered trees along it; from the eighth you looked back on the slope and saw the thatched house you had left behind under passing shadows. and rounded white clouds going straight for the distant hills, each cloud visibly bulging and bowed down like a bag. I cannot think how the distant thatched houses came to stand out with such clear definition and etched outline and bluish shadows; and beyond these there was the uncertain vale that had no individuality, but the trees put their arms together and became one. All these were meadows. every step was among grass, beautiful grass,

and the cuckoos sang as if they had found paradise. A hundred years ago a little old man with silver buckles on his shoes used to walk along this footpath once a week in summer, taking his children over to drink milk at the farm; but though he set them every time to note the number of fields, so busy were they with the nests and the flowers, they could never be sure at the end of the journey whether there were eight or nine. To make quite sure at last, he took with him a pocket full of apples, one of which was eaten in each field, and so they came to know for certain that the number of meadows was either eight or nine. I forget which; and so you see this great experiment did not fix the faith of mankind. Like other great truths, it has grown dim, but it seems strange to think how this little incident could have been borne in mind for a century. There was another footpath that led through the peewit field, where the green plovers for evermore circle round in spring; then past the nightingale field, by the largest maple trees that grew in that country; this too was all grass. Another led along the water to bluebell land; another into the coombs of the hills; all meadows, which was the beauty of it: for though you could find wheat in plenty if you liked, you always walked in grass. All round the compass you

could still step on sward. This is rare. Of one other path I have a faded memory. like a silk marker in an old book: in truth. I don't want to remember it. except the end of it where it came down to the railway. So full was the mind of romance in those days. that I used to get there specially in time to see the express go up. the magnificent engine of the broad gauge that swept along with such ease and power to London. I wish I could feel like that now. The feeling is not quite gone even now. and I have often since seen these great broad-gauge creatures moving alive to and fro like Ezekiel's wheel dream beside the platforms of Babylon with much of the same old delight. Still I never went back with them to the faded footpath. and they are all faded now. these footpaths too.

—*Field and Hedgers*



XXVI  
WHAT I LIVED FOR

HENRY DAVID THOREAU

I WENT to the woods because I wished to live deliberately, to front only the essential facts of life, and see if I could not learn what it had to teach, and not, when I came to die, discover that I had not lived. I did not wish to live what was not life, living is so dear: nor did I wish to practise resignation, unless it was quite necessary. I wanted to live deep and suck out all the marrow of life, to live so sturdily and Spartanlike as to put to rout all that was not life, to cut a broad swath and shave close, to drive life into a corner, and reduce it to its lowest terms, and, if it proved to be mean, why then to get the whole and genuine meanness of it, and publish its meanness to the world: or if it were sublime, to know it by experience, and be able to give a true account of it in my next excursion. For most men, it appears to me, are in a strange uncertainty about it, whether it is of the devil or of God, and have *somewhat hastily* concluded that it is the chief end of man here to "glorify God and enjoy Him forever."

Still we live meanly, like ants; though the fable tells us that we were long ago changed into men; like pigmies we fight with cranes; it is error upon error, and clout upon clout. and our best virtue has for its occasion a superfluous and evitable wretchedness. Our life is frittered away by detail. An honest man has hardly need to count more than his ten fingers. or in extreme cases he may add his ten toes and lump the rest. Simplicity, simplicity, simplicity I say. let your affairs be as two or three. and not a hundred or a thousand; instead of a million count half a dozen. and keep your accounts on your thumb nail. In the midst of this chopping sea of civilised life. such are the clouds and storms and quicksands and thousand and one items to be allowed for. that a man has to live. if he would not founder and go to the bottom and not make his port at all, by dead-reckoning, and he must be a great calculator indeed who succeeds. Simplify, simplify. Instead of three meals a day, if it be necessary eat but one; instead of a hundred dishes. five; and reduce other things in proportion. Our life is like a German Confederacy. made up of petty states. with its boundary forever fluctuating. so that even a German cannot tell you how it is bounded at any moment. The nation itself, with all its so-called internal

improvements, which, by the way, are all external and superficial, is just such an unwieldy and overgrown establishment, cluttered with furniture and tripped up by its own traps, ruined by luxury and heedless expense, by want of calculation and a worthy aim, as the million households in the land; and the only cure for it as for them is in a rigid economy, a stern and more than Spartan simplicity of life and elevation of purpose. It lives too fast. Men think that it is essential that the *Nation* have commerce, and export ice, and talk through a telegraph, and ride thirty miles an hour, without a doubt, whether *they* do or not; but whether we should live like baboons or like men, is a little uncertain. If we do not get out sleepers, and forge rails, and devote days and nights to the work, but go to tinkering upon our lives to improve them, who will build railroads? And if railroads are not built, how shall we get to heaven in season? But if we stay at home and mind our business, who will want railroads? We do not ride on the railroad: it rides upon us. Did you ever think what those sleepers are that underlie the railroad? Each one is a man, an Irishman, or a Yankee man. The rails are laid on them, and they are covered with sand, and the cars run smoothly over them. They are sound sleepers, I

assure you. And every few years a new lot is laid down and run over; so that, if some have the pleasure of riding on a rail, others have the misfortune to be ridden upon. And when they run over a man that is walking in his sleep, a supernumerary sleeper in the wrong position, and wake him up, they suddenly stop the cars, and make a hue and cry about it, as if this were an exception. I am glad to know that it takes a gang of men for every five miles to keep the sleepers down and level in their beds as it is, for this is a sign that they may some time get up again.

Why should we live with such hurry and waste of life? We are determined to be starved before we are hungry. Men say that a stitch in time saves nine, and so they take a thousand stitches to-day to save nine to-morrow. As for *work*, we haven't any of any consequence. We have the Saint Vitus' dance, and cannot possibly keep our heads still. If I should only give a few pulls at the parish bell-rope, as for a fire, that is, without setting the bell, there is hardly a man on his farm in the outskirts of Concord, notwithstanding that press of engagements which was his excuse so many times this morning, nor a boy, nor a woman. I might almost say, but would forsake all and follow that sound.

not mainly to save property from the flames, but, if we will confess the truth, much more to see it burn, since burn it must, and we, be it known, did not set on fire—or to see it put out, and have a hand in it, if that is done as handsomely; yes, even if it were the parish church itself. Hardly a man takes a half hour's nap after dinner, but when he wakes he holds up his head and asks, "What's the news?" as if the rest of mankind had stood his sentinels. Some give directions to be waked every half hour, doubtless for no other purpose; and then to pay for it, they tell what they have dreamed. After a night's sleep the news is as indispensable as the breakfast. "Pray, tell me anything new that has happened to a man anywhere on this globe"—and he reads it over his coffee and rolls, that a man has had his eyes gouged out this morning on the Wachito River; never dreaming the while that he lives in the dark unfathomed man-moth cave of this world, and has but the rudiment of an eye himself.

For my part, I could easily do without the post office. I think that there are very few important communications made through it. To speak critically, I never received more than one or two letters in my life—I wrote this some years ago—that were worth the postage.

The penny-post is, commonly, an institution through which you seriously offer a man that penny for his thoughts which is so often safely offered in jest. And I am sure that I never read any memorable news in a newspaper. If we read of one man robbed, or murdered, or killed by accident, or one house burned, or one vessel wrecked, or one steamboat blown up, or one cow run over on the Western Railroad, or one mad dog killed, or one lot of grasshoppers in the winter—we never need read of another. One is enough. If you are acquainted with the principle, what do you care for a myriad instances and applications? To a philosopher all *news*, as it is called, is gossip, and they who edit and read it are old women over their tea. Yet not a few are greedy after this gossip. There was such a rush, as I hear, the other day at one of the offices to learn the foreign news by the last arrival, that several large squares of plate glass belonging to the establishment were broken by the pressure—news which I seriously think a ready wit might write a twelvemonth or twelve years beforehand with sufficient accuracy. As for Spain, for instance, if you know how to throw in Don Carlos and the Infanta, and Don Pedro and Seville and Granada, from time to time in the right proportions—they may have changed the

names a little since I saw the papers—and serve up a bull-fight when other entertainments fail, it will be true to the letter, and give us as good an idea of the exact state or ruin of things in Spain as the most succinct and lucid reports under this head in the newspapers: and as for England, almost the last significant scrap of news from that quarter was the Revolution of 1649: and if you have learned the history of her crops for an average year, you never need attend to that thing again, unless your speculations are of a merely pecuniary character. If one may judge who rarely looks into the newspapers, nothing new does ever happen in foreign parts, a French Revolution not excepted.

What news! how much more important to know what that is which was never old! “Kieou-he-yu (great dignitary of the state of Wei) sent a man to Khoung-tseu to know his news. Khoung-tseu caused the messenger to be seated near him, and questioned him in these terms: What is your master doing? The messenger answered with respect: My master desires to diminish the number of his faults, but he cannot come to the end of them. The messenger being gone, the philosopher remarked: What a worthy messenger! What a worthy messenger!” The preacher, instead of vexing the ears of drowsy farmers

on their day of rest at the end of the week—for Sunday is the fit conclusion of an ill-spent week, and not the fresh and brave beginning of a new one—with this one other draggle-tail of a sermon, should shout with thundering voice—"Pause! Avast! Why so seeming fast, but deadly slow?"

Shams and delusions are esteemed for soundest truths, while reality is fabulous. If men would steadily observe realities only, and not allow themselves to be deluded, life, to compare it with such things as we know, would be like a fairy tale and the Arabian Nights' Entertainments. If we respected only what is inevitable and has a right to be, music and poetry would resound along the streets. When we are unhurried and wise, we perceive that only great and worthy things have any permanent and absolute existence—that petty fears and petty pleasures are but the shadow of the reality. This is always exhilarating and sublime. By closing the eyes and slumbering, and consenting to be deceived by shows, men establish and confirm their daily life of routine and habit everywhere, which still is built on purely illusory foundations. Children, who play life, discern its true law and relations more clearly than men, who fail to live it worthily, but who think that they are wiser by



experience, that is, by failure. I have read in a Hindoo book, that "there was a king's son, who, being expelled in infancy from his native city, was brought up by a forester, and, growing up to maturity in that state, imagined himself to belong to the barbarous race with which he lived. One of his father's ministers having discovered him, revealed to him what he was, and the misconception of his character was removed, and he knew himself to be a prince. So soul," continues the Hindoo philosopher, "from the circumstances in which it is placed, mistakes its own character, until the truth is revealed to it by some holy teacher, and then it knows itself to be *Brahma*." I perceive that we inhabitants of New England live this mean life that we do because our vision does not penetrate the surface of things. We think that that is which *appears* to be. If a man should walk through this town and see only the reality, where, think you, would the "Mill-dam" go to? If he should give us an account of the realities he beheld there, we should not recognise the place in his description. Look at a meeting-house, or a court-house, or a jail, or a shop, or a dwelling-house, and say what that thing really is before a true gaze, and they would all go to pieces in your account of them. Men esteem truth remote, in the

outskirts of the system, behind the farthest star. before Adam and after the last man. In eternity there is indeed something true and sublime. But all these times and places and occasions are now and here. God himself culminates in the present moment, and will never be more divine in the lapse of all the ages. And we are enabled to apprehend at all what is sublime and noble only by the perpetual instilling and drenching of the reality that surrounds us. The universe constantly and obediently answers to our conceptions; whether we travel fast or slow, the track is laid for us. Let us spend our lives in conceiving them. The poet or the artist never yet had so fair and noble a design but some of his posterity at least could accomplish it.

Let us spend one day as deliberately as Nature, and not be thrown off the track by every nutshell and mosquito's wing that falls on the rails. Let us rise early and fast, or breakfast, gently and without perturbation; let company come and let company go, let the bells ring and the children cry—determined to make a day of it. Why should we knock under and go with the stream? Let us not be upset and overwhelmed in that terrible rapid and whirlpool called a dinner, situated in the meridian shallows. Weather this danger and you are

safe, for the rest of the way is downhill. With unrelaxed nerves, with morning vigour, sail by it, looking another way, tied to the mast like Ulysses. If the engine whistles, let it whistle till it is hoarse for its pains. If the bell rings, why should we run? We will consider what kind of music they are like. Let us settle ourselves, and work and wedge our feet downward through the mud and slush of opinion, and prejudice, and tradition, and delusion, and appearance, that alluvion which covers the globe, through Paris and London, through New York and Boston and Concord, through church and state, through poetry and philosophy and religion, till we come to a hard bottom and rocks in place, which we can call *reality*, and say, This is, and no mistake; and then begin, having a *point d'appui*, below freshet and frost and fire, a place where you might found a wall or a state, or set a lamp-post safely, or perhaps a guage, not a Nilometer, but a Realometer, that future ages might know how deep a freshet of shams and appearances had gathered from time to time. If you stand right fronting and face to face to a fact, you will see the sun glimmer on both its surfaces, as if it were a cimeter, and feel its sweet edge dividing you through the heart and marrow, and so you will happily conclude your mortal career. Be it

life or death. we crave only reality. If we are really dying, let us hear the rattle in our throats and feel cold in the extremities; if we are alive, let us go about our business.

Time is but the stream I go a-fishing in. I drink at it; but while I drink I see the sandy bottom and detect how shallow it is. Its thin current slides away, but eternity remains. I would drink deeper; fish in the sky, whose bottom is pebbly with stars. I cannot count one. I know not the first letter of the alphabet. I have always been regretting that I was not as wise as the day I was born. The intellect is a cleaver: it discerns and rifts its way into the secret of things. I do not wish to be any more busy with my hands than is necessary. My head is hands and feet. I feel all my best faculties concentrated in it. My instinct tells me that my head is an organ for burrowing, as some creatures use their snout and fore-paws and with it I would mine and burrow my way through these hills. I think that the richest vein is somewhere hercabouts: so by the divining rod and thin rising vapours I judge; and here I will begin to mine.

—*Walden or Life in the Woods*

## XXVII HOMERIC LIFE

JAMES ANTHONY FROUDE

OUR first boy's feeling with the *Iliad* is, that Homer is pre-eminently a poet of war; that battles were his own passion, and tales of battles the delight of his listeners. His heroes appear like a great fighting aristocracy, such as the after Spartans were, himself like another Tyrtæus, and the poorer occupations of life too menial for their notice or for his. They seem to live for glory—the one glory worth caring for, only to be won upon the battle-field; and their exploits the one worthy theme of the poet's song. This is our boyish impression, and, like other such, it is the very opposite of the truth. If war had been a passion with the Ionians, as it was with the Tentons and the Norsemen, Ares would have been the supreme god, as Thor and Odin were; and Zeus would scarcely have called him the most hateful spirit in Olympus—most hateful, *because* of his delight in war and carnage. Mr. Carlyle looks forward to a chivalry of labour. He rather wishes than expects that a time-

may come when the campaign of industry against anarchic nature may gather into it those feelings of gallantry and nobleness which have found their vent hitherto in fighting only. The modern man's work, he says, is no longer to splinter lances or break down walls, but to break soil, to build barns and factories, and to find a high employment for himself in what hitherto has been despised as degrading. How to elevate it—how to make it beautiful—how to enlist the *spirit* in it (for in no other way can it be made humanly profitable), that is the problem which he looks wistfully to the future to solve for us. He may look to the past as well as to the future: in the old Ionia he will find all for which he wishes. The wise Ulysses built his own house, and carved his own bed; princes killed and cooked their own food. It was a holy work with them—their way of saying grace for it; for they offered the animal in his death to the gods, and they were not butchers, but sacrificing priests. Even a keeper of swine is called noble, and fights like a hero; and the young princess of Phocæa—the loveliest and gracefuller of Homer's women—drove the clothes-cart and washed linen with her own beautiful hands. Not only was labour free—for so it was among the early Romans; or honourable, so it was among the Israelites,—

but it was beautiful—beautiful in the artist's sense, as perhaps elsewhere it has never been. In later Greece, in what we call the glorious period, toil had gathered about it its modern crust of supposed baseness—it was left to slaves; and wise men, in their philosophic lecture-rooms, spoke of it as unworthy of the higher specimens of humanity.

But Homer finds, in its most homely forms, fit illustrations for the most glorious achievements of his heroes; and in every page we find, in simile or metaphor, some common scene of daily life worked out with elaborate beauty. What the popular poet chooses for his illustrations are as good a measure as we can have of the popular feeling, and the images which he suggests are, of course, what he knows it will delight his hearers to dwell upon. There is much to be said about this, and we shall return to it presently; in the meantime, we must not build on indirect evidence. The designs on the shield of Achilles are, together, a complete picture of Homer's microcosm; and he surely never thought inglorious or ignoble what the immortal art of Hephaistos condescended to imitate.

The first groups of figures point a contrast which is obviously intentional; and the significance becomes sadly

earnest when we remember who it was that was to bear this shield. The moral is a very modern one, and the picture might be called by the modern name of Peace and War. There are two cities. embodying in their condition the two ideas. In one, a happy wedding is going forward; the pomp of the hymeneal procession is passing along the streets: the air is full of music. and the women are standing at their doors to gaze. The other is in all the terrors of a siege; the hostile armies glitter under the walls. the women and children pressed into the defence. and crowding to the battlements. In the first city. a quarrel rises. and wrong is made right. not by violence and fresh wrong. but by the majesty of law and order. The heads of the families are sitting gravely in the market place. the cause is heard. the compensation set. the claim awarded. Under the walls of the other city an ambush lies. like a wild beast on the watch for its prey. The unsuspecting herdsmen pass on with their flocks to the water-side: the spoilers spring from their hiding-place. and all is strife. and death. and horror. and confusion. If there were other war-scenes on the shield. it might be doubted whether Homer intended so strong a contrast as he executed; but fighting for its own sake was held in slight respect with him. The forms



of life which were really beautiful to him follow in a series of exquisite Rubens-like pictures: harvest scenes and village festivals; the ploughing and the vintage, or the lion-hunt on the reedy margin of the river; and he describes them with a serene, sunny enjoyment, which no other old world art or poetry gives us anything in the least resembling. Even we ourselves, in our own pastorals, are struggling with but half success, after what Homer entirely possessed. What a majesty he has thrown into his harvest scene! The yellow corn falling, the boys following to gather up the large arms full as they drop behind the reapers: in the distance a banquet preparing under the trees: in the centre, in the midst of his workmen, the king sitting in mellow silence, sceptre in hand, looking on with gladdened heart;—or those ploughmen, rather unlike what are to be seen in our corn-grounds, turning their teams at the end of the furrow, and attendants standing ready with the wine-cup, to hand them as they passed. Homer had seen these things, or he would not have sung of them: and princes and nobles might have shared such labour without shame with kings among them, and gods to design them, and a divine Achilles to carry their images among his insignia into the field.

Analogous to this, and as part of the same feeling, is that intense enjoyment of natural scenery, so keen in Homer, and of which the Athenian poets show not a trace: as, for instance, in that night landscape by the sea, finished off in a few lines only, but so exquisitely perfect! The broad moon, gleaming through the mist as it parts suddenly from off the sky: and the crags and headlands, soft wooded slopes, shining out in the silver light. Lines like these show what the Ionians were, for they show what they took interest in.

But we spoke of Homer's similes as illustrative of the Ionic feelings towards war. War, of course, was glorious to him—but war in a glorious cause. Wars there were—wars in plenty, as there have been since, and as it is like there will be for some time to come; and a just war, of all human employments, is the one which most calls out whatever nobleness there is in man. It was the thing itself, the actual fighting and killing, as apart from the heroism for which it makes opportunities, above which, we said, he was raised so far, and that his manner showed it. His spirit stirs in him as he goes out with his hero to the battle; but there is no drunken delight in blood; we never hear of warriors as in that grim Hall of the *Nibelungen*, quenching their thirst in it; never any-

thing of that fierce exultation in carnage with which the war poetry of so many nations, late and old, is crimsoned. Everything, on the contrary, is contrived so as to soften the merely horrible, and fix our interest only on what is grand or beautiful. We are never left to dwell long together on scenes of death, and when the battle is at its fiercest, our minds are called off by the rapid introduction (either by simile or some softer turn of human feeling) of other associations, not contrived as an inferior artist would contrive, to deepen our emotions, but to soften and relieve them: thus two warriors meet, exchange their high words of defiance: we hear the grinding of the spear-head, as it pierces shield and breast-plate, and the crash of the armour, as this or that hero falls. But at once, instead of being left at his side to see him bleed, we are summoned away to the soft water meadow, the lazy river, the tall poplar, now waving its branches against the sky, now lying its length along in the grass beside the water, and the wood-cutter with peaceful industry labouring and lopping at it.

In the thick of the universal *mêlée*, when the stones and arrows are raining on the combatants, and some furious hail-storm is the slightest illustration with which we should expect him to heighten the effect of the human

tempest. so sure Homer is that he has painted the thing itself in its own intense reality. that his simile is the stillest phenomenon in all nature—a stillness of activity, infinitely expressive of the density of the shower of missiles. yet falling like oil on water on the ruffled picture of the battle; the snow descending in the *still* air. covering first hills. then plains and fields and farmsteads; covering the rocks down to the very water's edge, and clogging the waves as they roll in. Again in that fearful death-wrestle at the Grecian wall, when gates and battlements are sprinkled over with blood, and neither Greek nor Trojan can force their way against the other, we have. first. as an image of the fight itself, two men in the field, with measuring rods. disputing over a land boundary; and for the equipoise of the two armies. the softest of all home scenes. a poor working woman weighing out her wool before weaving it. to earn a scanty subsistence for herself and for her children.

Of course the similes are not all of this kind; it would be monotonous if they were; but they occur often enough to mark their meaning. In the direct narrative. too, we see the same tendency. Sarpedon struck through the thigh is borne off the field. the long spear trailing from the wound. and there is too much haste to draw

it out. Hector flies past him and has no time to speak: all is dust, hurry, and confusion. Even Homer can only pause with him for a moment, but in three lines he lays him under a tree, he brings a dear friend to his side, and we refresh ourselves in a beautiful scene, when the lance is taken out and Sarpedon faints, and comes slowly back to life, with the cool air fanning him. We may look in vain through the *Nibelungen Lied* for anything like this. The Swabian poet can be tender before the battle, but in the battle itself his barbaric nature is too strong for him, and he scents nothing but blood. In the *Iliad*, on the contrary, the very battles of the gods, grand and awful as they are, do not add to the human horror, but relieve it. In the magnificent scene, where Achilles, weary with slaughter, pauses on the bank of the Scamander, and the angry river god, whose course is checked by the bodies of the slain, swells up to revenge them and destroy him, the natural and the supernatural are so strangely blended, that when Poseidon lights the forest, and god meets god and element meets element, the convulsion is too tremendous to enhance the fierceness of Achilles: it concentrates the interest on itself, and Achilles and Hector, flying Trojan and pursuing Greek, for the time melt out and are forgotten.

We do not forget that there is nothing of this kind. no relief. no softening. in the great scene at the conclusion of the *Odyssey*. All is stern enough and terrible enough there: more terrible. if possible. because more distinct. than its modern counterpart in *Criemhilda's Hall*. But there is an obvious reason for this. and it does not make against what we have been saying. It is not delight in slaughter. but it is the stern justice of revenge which we have here: not. as in the *Iliad*. hero meeting hero. but the long crime receiving at last its divine punishment: the breaking of the one storm. which from the beginning has been slowly and awfully gathering.

—*Short Studies on Great Subjects*

## XXVIII

### THE OPEN SKY

JOHN RUSKIN

It is a strange thing how little in general people know about the sky. It is the part of creation in which nature has done more for the sake of pleasing man, more, for the sole and evident purpose of talking to him and teaching him, than in any other of her works, and it is just the part in which we least attend to her. There are not many of her other works in which some more material or essential purpose than the mere pleasing of man is not answered by every part of their organization: but every essential purpose of the sky might, so far as we know, be answered, if once in three days, or thereabouts, a great, ugly black rain cloud were brought up over the blue, and everything well watered, and so all left blue again till next time, with perhaps a film of morning and evening mist for dew. And instead of this, there is not a moment of any day of our lives, when nature is not producing scene after scene, picture after picture, glory after glory, and working still upon such exquisite and constant principles of the most perfect

beauty, that it is quite certain it is all done for us, and intended for our perpetual pleasure. And every man, wherever placed, however far from other sources of interest or of beauty, has this doing for him constantly. The noblest scenes of the earth can be seen and known but by few: it is not intended that man should live always in the midst of them: he injures them by his presence, he ceases to feel them if he be always with them: but the sky is for all: bright as it is, it is not "too bright, nor good, for human nature's daily food," it is fitted in all its functions for the perpetual comfort and exulting of the heart, for soothing it and purifying it from its dross and dust. Sometimes gentle, sometimes capricious, sometimes awful, never the same for two moments together: almost human in its passions, almost spiritual in its tenderness, almost divine in its infinity, its appeal to what is immortal in us, is as distinct, as its ministry of chastisement or of blessing to what is mortal is essential. And yet we never attend to it, we never make it a subject of thought, but as it has to do with our animal sensations, we look upon all by which it speaks to us more clearly than to brutes, upon all which bears witness to the intention of the Supreme, that we are to receive more from the covering vault than the light and the



dew which we share with the weed and the worm, only as a succession of meaningless and monotonous accident, too common and too vain to be worthy of a moment of watchfulness, or a glance of admiration. If in our moments of utter idleness and insipidity, we turn to the sky as a last resource, which of its phenomena do we speak of? One says it has been wet, and another, it has been windy, and another, it has been warm. Who, among the whole chattering crowd, can tell me of the forms and the precipices of the chain of tall white mountains that girded the horizon at noon yesterday? Who saw the narrow sunbeam that came out of the south, and smote upon their summits until they melted and mouldered away in a dust of blue rain? Who saw the dance of the dead clouds when the sunlight left them last night, and the west wind blew them before it like withered leaves? All has passed, unregretted as unseen; or if the apathy be ever shaken off, even for an instant, it is only by what is gross, or what is extraordinary; and yet it is not in the broad and fierce manifestations of the elemental energies, not in the clash of the hail, nor the drift of the whirlwind, that the highest characters of the sublime are developed. God is not in the earthquake, nor in the fire, but in the still, small voice. They are but

the blunt and the low faculties of our nature, which can only be addressed through lampblack and lightning. It is in quiet and subdued passages of unobtrusive majesty, the deep, and the calm, and the perpetual—that which must be sought ere it is seen, and loved ere it is understood—things which the angels work out for us daily, and yet vary eternally, which are never wanting, and never repeated, which are to be found always, yet each found but once; it is through these that the lesson of devotion is chiefly taught, and the blessing of beauty given.

—*Modern Painters*

## XXIX

### A LIBERAL EDUCATION

THOMAS HUXLEY

SUPPOSE it were perfectly certain that the life and fortune of every one of us would, one day or other, depend upon his winning or losing a game at chess. Don't you think that we should all consider it to be a primary duty to learn at least the names and the moves of the pieces; to have a notion of a gambit and a keen eye for all the means of giving and getting out of check? Do you not think that we should look with a disapprobation amounting to scorn upon the father who allowed his son, or the state which allowed its members, to grow up without knowing a pawn from a knight?

Yet, it is a very plain and elementary truth, that the life, the fortune, and the happiness of every one of us, and, more or less, of those who are connected with us, do depend upon our knowing something of the rules of a game infinitely more difficult and complicated than chess. It is a game which has been played for untold ages, every man and woman of us being one of the two

players in a game of his or her own. The chess-board is the world, the pieces are the phenomena of the universe, the rules of the game are what we call the laws of Nature. The player on the other side is hidden from us. We know that his play is always fair, just, and patient. But also we know, to our cost, that he never overlooks a mistake, or makes the smallest allowance for ignorance. To the man who plays well the highest stakes are paid, with that sort of overflowing generosity with which the strong shows delight in strength. And one who plays ill is checkmated—without haste, but without remorse.

My metaphor will remind some of you of the famous picture in which Retzsch has depicted Satan playing at chess with man for his soul. Substitute for the mocking fiend in that picture a calm, strong angel who is playing for love, as we say, and would rather lose than win—and I should accept it as an image of human life.

Well, what I mean by Education is learning the rules of this mighty game. In other words, education is the instruction of the intellect in the laws of Nature, under which name I include not merely things and their forces, but men and their ways; and the fashioning of

the affections and of the will into an earnest and loving desire to move in harmony with those laws. For me, education means neither more nor less than this. Anything which professes to call itself education must be tried by this standard, and if it fails to stand the test, I will not call it education, whatever may be the force of authority, or of numbers, upon the other side.

It is important to remember that, in strictness, there is no such thing as an uneducated man. Take an extreme case. Suppose that an adult man, in the full vigour of his faculties, could be suddenly placed in the world, as Adam is said to have been, and then left to do as he best might. How long would he be left uneducated? Not five minutes. Nature would begin to teach him, through the eye, the ear, the touch, the properties of objects. Pain and pleasure would be at his elbow telling him to do this and avoid that; and by slow degrees the man would receive an education, which, if narrow, would be thorough, real, and adequate to his circumstances, though there would be no extras and very few accomplishments.

And if to this solitary man entered a second Adam, or, better still, an Eve, a new and greater world, that of social and moral phenomena, would be revealed. Joys

and woes. compared with which all others might seem but faint shadows, would spring from the new relations. Happiness and sorrow would take the place of the coarser monitors. pleasure and pain: but conduct would still be shaped by the observation of the natural consequences of actions: or. in other words. by the laws or the nature of man.

To every one of us the world was once as fresh and new as to Adam. And then. long before we were susceptible of any other mode of instruction, Nature took us in hand. and every minute of waking life brought its educational influence. shaping our actions into rough accordance with Nature's laws, so that we might not be ended untimely by too gross disobedience. Nor should I speak of this process of education as past for any one. be he as old as he may. For every man the world is as fresh as it was at the first day. and as full of untold novelties for him who has the eyes to see them. And Nature is still continuing her patient education of us in that great university. the universe. of which we are all members—Nature having no Test-Acts.

Those who take honours in Nature's university. who learn the laws which govern men and things and obey them. are the really great and successful men in this

world. The great mass of mankind are the "Poll," who pick up just enough to get through without much discredit. Those who won't learn at all are plucked: and then you can't come up again. Nature's pluck means extermination.

Thus the question of compulsory education is settled so far as Nature is concerned. Her bill on that question was framed and passed long ago. But, like all compulsory legislation, that of Nature is harsh and wasteful in its operation. Ignorance is visited as sharply as wilful disobedience—incapacity meets with the same punishment as crime. Nature's discipline is not even a word and a blow, and the blow first—but the blow without the word. It is left to you to find out why your ears are boxed.

The object of what we commonly call education—that education in which man intervenes and which I shall distinguish as artificial education—is to make good these defects in Nature's methods: to prepare the child to receive Nature's education, neither incapably nor ignorantly, nor with wilful disobedience; and to understand the preliminary symptoms of her displeasure, without waiting for the box on the ear. In short, all artificial education ought to be an anticipation of natural

education. And a liberal education is an artificial education, which has not only prepared a man to escape the great evils of disobedience to natural laws, but has trained him to appreciate and to seize upon the rewards which Nature scatters with as free a hand as her penalties.

That man, I think, has had a liberal education, who has been so trained in youth that his body is the ready servant of his will, and does with ease and pleasure all the work that, as a mechanism, it is capable of; whose intellect is a clear, cold, logic engine, with all its parts of equal strength, and in smooth working order; ready, like a steam-engine, to be turned to any kind of work, and spin the gossamers as well as forge the anchors of the mind; whose mind is stored with a knowledge of the great and fundamental truths of Nature and of the laws of her operations: one who, no stunted ascetic, is full of life and fire, but whose passions are trained to come to heel by a vigorous will, the servant of a tender conscience; who has learned to love all beauty, whether of Nature or of art, to hate all vileness, and to respect others as himself.

Such an one and no other, I conceive, has had a liberal education; for he is, as completely as a man can



be, in harmony with Nature. He will make the best of her, and she of him. They will get on together rarely; she as his ever beneficent mother; he as her mouthpiece, her conscious self, her minister and interpreter.

—Addresses

# XXX

## PAN'S PIPES

ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON

THE world in which we live has been variously said and sung by the most ingenious poets and philosophers: these reducing it to formulæ and chemical ingredients, those striking the lyre in high-sounding measures for the handiwork of God. What experience supplies is of a mingled tissue, and the choosing mind has much to reject before it can get together the materials of a theory. Dew and thunder, destroying Attila and the Spring lambkins, belong to an order of contrasts which no repetition can assimilate. There is an uncouth, outlandish strain throughout the web of the world, as from a vexatious planet in the house of life. Things are not congruous and wear strange disguises: the consummate flower is fostered out of dung, and after nourishing itself awhile with heaven's delicate distillations, decays again into indistinguishable soil; and with Cæsar's ashes, Hamlet tells us, the urchins make dirt pies and filthily besmear their countenances. Nay, the kindly shine of summer, when tracked home with the scientific spy-glass, is found to

issue from the most portentous nightmare of the universe—the great, conflagrant sun: a world of hell's squibs, tumultuary, roaring aloud, inimical to life. The sun itself is enough to disgust a human being of the scene which he inhabits; and you would not fancy there was a green or habitable spot in a universe thus awfully lighted up. And yet it is by the blaze of such a conflagration, to which the fire of Rome was but a spark, that we do all our fiddling, and hold domestic tea-parties at the arbour door.

The Greeks figured Pan, the god of Nature, now terribly stamping his foot, so that armies were dispersed; now by the woodside on a summer noon trolling on his pipe until he charmed the hearts of upland ploughmen. And the Greeks, in so figuring, uttered the last word of human experience. To certain smoke-dried spirits matter and motion and elastic æthers; and the hypothesis of this or that other spectacled professor, tell a speaking story; but for youth and all ductile and congenial minds, Pan is not dead, but of all the classic hierarchy alone survives in triumph; goat-footed, with a gleeful and an angry look, the type of the shaggy world: and in every wood, if you go with a spirit properly prepared, you shall hear the note of his pipe.

For it is a shaggy world, and yet studded with gardens: where the salt and tumbling sea receives clear rivers running from among reeds and lilies; fruitful and austere: a rustic world; sunshiny, lewd, and cruel.' What means the sound of the rain falling far and wide upon the leafy forest? To what tune does the fisherman whistle, as he hauls in his net at morning, and the bright fish are heaped inside the boat? These are all airs upon Pan's pipe: he it was who gave them breath in the exultation of his heart, and gleefully modulated their outflow with his lips and fingers. The coarsé mirth of herdsmen, shaking the dells with laughter and striking out high echoes from the rock; the tune of moving feet in the lamplit city, or on the smooth ballroom floor; the hooves of many horses, beating the wide pastures in alarm: the song of hurrying rivers; the colour of clear skies: and smiles and the live touch of hands; and the voice of things, and their significant look, and the renovating influence they breathe forth—these are his joyful measures, to which the whole earth treads in choral harmony. To this music the young lambs bound as to a tabor, and the London shop-girl skips rudely in the dance. For it puts a spirit of gladness in all hearts; and to look on the happy side of nature is common, in

their hours, to all created things. Some are vocal under a good influence, are pleasing whenever they are pleased, and hand on their happiness to others as a child who, looking upon lovely things, looks lovely. Some leap to the strains with unapt foot, and make a halting figure in the universal dance. And some, like sour spectators at the play, receive the music into their hearts with an unmoved countenance, and walk like strangers through the general rejoicing. But let him feign never so carefully, there is not a man but has his pulses shaken when Pan trolls out a stave of ecstasy and sets the world a-singing.

Alas, if that were all! But oftentimes the air is changed; and in the screech of the night wind, chasing navies, subverting the tall ships and the rooted cedar of the hills; in the random deadly levin, or the fury of headlong floods, we recognise the "dread foundation" of life and the anger in Pan's heart. Earth wages open war against her children, and under her softest touch hides treacherous claws. The cool waters invite us in to drown; the domestic hearth burns up in the hour of sleep, and makes an end of all. Everything is good or bad, helpful or deadly, not in itself, but by its circumstances. For a few bright days in England the hurricane

must break forth and the North Sea pay a toll of populous ships. And when the universal music has led lovers into the path of dalliance, confident of Nature's sympathy, suddenly the air shifts into a minor, and death makes a clutch from his ambuscade below the bed of marriage. For death is given in a kiss; the dearest kindnesses are fatal; and into this life, where one thing preys upon another, the child too often makes its entrance from the mother's corpse. It is no wonder, with so traitorous a scheme of things, if the wise people who created for us the idea of Pan thought that of all fears the fear of him was the most terrible, since it embraces all. And still we preserve the phrase: a panic terror. To reckon dangers too curiously, to hearken too intently for the threat that runs through all the winning music of the world, to hold back the hand from the rose because of the thorn, and from life because of death: this it is to be afraid of Pan. Highly respectable citizens who flee life's pleasures and responsibilities and keep, with upright hat, upon the midway of custom, avoiding the right hand and the left, the ecstasies and the agonies, how surprised they would be if they could hear their attitude mythologically expressed, and knew themselves as tooth-chattering ones, who flee from Nature because they fear the hand of

Nature's God! Shrilly sound Pan's pipes; and behold the banker instantly concealed in the bank parlour! For to distrust one's impulses is to be recreant to Pan.

There are moments when the mind refuses to be satisfied with evolution, and demands a ruddier presentation of the sun of Man's experience. Sometimes the mood is brought about by laughter at the humorous side of life, as when, abstracting ourselves from earth, we imagine people plodding on foot, or seated in ships and speedy trains, with the planet all the while whirling in the opposite direction, so that, for all their hurry, they travel back foremost through the universe of space. Sometimes it comes by the spirit of delight, and sometimes by the spirit of terror. At least, there will always be hours when we refuse to be put off by the feint of explanation, nicknamed science: and demand instead some palpitating image of our estate, that shall represent the troubled and uncertain element in which we dwell, and satisfy reason by the means of art. Science writes of the world as if with the cold finger of a starfish; it is all true; but what is it when compared to the reality of which it discourses where hearts beat high in April, and death strikes, and hills totter in the earthquake, and there is a glamour over all the objects of sight, and a

thrill in all noises for the ear. and Romance herself has made her dwelling among men? So we come back to the old myth. and hear the goat-footed piper making the music which is itself the charm and terror of things; and when a glen invites our visiting footsteps. fancy that Pan leads us thither with a gracious tremolo; or when our hearts quail at the thunder of the cataract. tell ourselves that he has stamped his hoof in the nigh thicket.

—*Virginibus Puerisque*



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—*Virginibus Puerisque*

## XXXI ON LIBRARIES

LORD AVEBURY

A GREAT Englishman, Richard de Bury, Bishop of Durham, writing in praise of books more than five hundred years ago, well said: "These are the masters who instruct us without rods and ferules, without hard words and anger, without clothes or money. If you approach them, they are not asleep; if, investigating, you interrogate them, they conceal nothing; if you mistake them, they never grumble: if you are ignorant, they cannot laugh at you. The library, therefore, of wisdom is more precious than all riches, and nothing that can be wished for is worthy to be compared with it. Who-soever, therefore, acknowledges himself to be a zealous follower of truth, of happiness, of wisdom, of science, or even of the faith, must of necessity make himself a lover of books."

And if he could say this with truth so long ago, how much more may we do so now. Let us just consider how much better off we are than he was then. In the first place, to say nothing of the advantages of print, how

much cheaper books are. For the price of a little beer, or one or two pipes of tobacco, a man can buy as much as he can read in a month; in his day, on the contrary, books were very expensive. Again, while our books are small and handy, theirs were ponderous, immense, very inconvenient either to hold or read. Even our most learned books are in one sense light reading. But, what is far more important, we have not only all the most interesting books which De Bury could command, but many more also. Even of ancient literature, much had been lost and has been re-discovered. In his day one might almost say that the novel was unknown. As regards Poetry he lived before Shakespeare or Milton, Scott or Byron, to say nothing of more recent authors. We have the delightful and fascinating voyages of Captain Cook, Darwin, Humboldt, and many other great travellers and explorers. In science, chemistry and geology have been created, and indeed the progress of discovery has made all the other sciences,—natural history, astronomy, geography, etc., far more interesting.

Schopenhauer has observed that though his Science never brought him in any income, it had saved him a great deal of expense. As a nation, we must gratefully admit that science has not only reduced our expenditure

in various ways, but has added enormously to our income. Money spent on schools, libraries, and museums is rather an investment than an expense. We do not, however, advocate schools and Public Libraries because they save our pockets, but because they do so much to lighten and brighten the lives of our fellow-citizens. There is but little amusement in the lives of the very poor.

I have been good-humouredly laughed at more than once for having expressed the opinion that in the next generation the great readers would be our artisans and mechanics.

But is not the continued increase of Public Libraries an argument in support of my contention? Before a Free Library can be started a popular vote must be taken, and we know that the clergy and the lawyers, the doctors and the mercantile men, form but a small fraction of the voters. The Public Libraries are called into being by the artisan and the small shopkeeper, and it is by them that they are mainly used. Books are peculiarly necessary to the working-men in our towns. Their life is one of much monotony. The savage has a far more varied existence. He must watch the habits of the game he hunts, their migrations and feeding-grounds; he must know where and how to fish; every month brings

him some fresh occupation and some change of food. He must prepare his weapons and build his own house; even the lighting of a fire, so easy now, is to him a matter of labour and skill. The agricultural labourer turns his hand to many things. He ploughs and sows, mows and reaps. He plants at one season, uses the bill-hook and the axe at another. He looks after the sheep and pigs and cows. To hold the plough, to lay a fence, to tie up a sheaf, is by no means so easy as it looks. It is said of Wordsworth that a stranger having on one occasion asked to see his study, the maid said: "This is master's room, but he studies in the fields." The agricultural labourer learns a great deal in the fields. He knows much more than we give him credit for. It is field-learning, not book-learning—but none the worse for that.

On the other hand, the man who works in a shop or manufactory has a much more monotonous life. He is confined to one process, or, perhaps, even one part of a process, from year's end to year's end. He acquires, no doubt, a skill little short of miraculous, but, on the other hand, very narrow. If he is not himself to become a mere animated machine, he must generally obtain, and in some cases he can only obtain, the necessary variety and interest from the use of books. There is happily

now some tendency to shorten the hours of labour; and which is less satisfactory, there are times when work is slack. But the hours of leisure should not be hours of idleness: leisure is one of the grandest blessings, idleness one of the greatest curses—one is the source of happiness, the other of misery. Suppose a poor man has for a few days no work, what is he to do? How is he to employ his time? If he has access to a Library it need no longer be lost.

The reasons for educating our children apply equally to the grown-up. We have now all over the country good elementary schools. We do our best to educate our children. We teach them to read, and try to give them a love of reading. Why do we do this? Because we believe that no one can study without being the better for it, that it tends to make the man the better workman, and the workmen the better man. But education ought never to stop, and the library is the school for the grown-up. There is a story that King Alfred, when a child, once set his heart on a book. "He shall have the book," said his mother, "when he can read it;" and by that title Alfred won it. Our children have learnt to read; have they not also the same title to books? Many of those who are not Socialists would be so if they

thought Socialism would have the effect which its advocates anticipate. It is because we do not believe that Socialism in the ordinary sense would promote "the greatest good of the greatest number," that we are not Socialists. But the difficulties we feel do not apply to books. It is said that a poor woman on seeing the Sea for the first time was delighted. "It was grand," she said, "to see something of which there was enough for everybody." Well, there are books enough for every one, and the best books are the cheapest. Reading is a pleasure as to which wealth gives scarcely any advantage. This applies to few other things. We who are engaged in the "puzzle of business" seem always to wish for rather more than we have. But in books fortune showers on us more than we can possibly use.

We are beginning to realise that education should last through life, that the education of our children should not be a mere matter of grammar and of words, but should include some training of the hand and eye; so, on the other hand, the life of the grown-up man and woman should not be altogether devoted to work with the hands or to the pursuit of money, but they should devote some time to the acquisition of knowledge, and the improvement of their minds. Why should not every

one, moreover, add something to the sum of human knowledge? However humble his lot in life, he may do so. We do not yet appreciate the dignity of manual labour, and there seems a general impression that science is something up in the clouds; all very well for philosophers and men of genius, and those who have the means of buying expensive apparatus, but for them only. This is quite a mistake. To whom do we owe our national progress? Partly, no doubt, to wise sovereigns and statesmen, partly to our brave Army and Navy, partly to the gallant explorers who paved the way to our Colonial Empire, partly to students and philosophers. But while we remember with gratitude all they have accomplished, we must not forget that the British workman, besides all he has done with his strong right arm, has used his brains also to great advantage.

Watt was a mechanical engineer; Henry Cort, whose improvements in manufactures are said to have added more to the wealth of England than the whole value of the national debt, was the son of a brickmaker; Huntsman, the inventor of cast steel, was a watchmaker; Crompton was a weaver; Wedgwood was a potter; Brindley, Telford, Mushet, and Neilson were workmen; George Stephenson began life as a cowboy at two-



pence a day, and could not read till he was eighteen: Dalton was the son of a weaver; Faraday of a blacksmith; Newcomen of a blacksmith: Arkwright began life as a barber; Sir Humphry Davy was an apothecary's apprentice: Boulton. "the father of Birmingham," was the son of a buttonmaker; Watt of a carpenter. The life of these men is indeed an inspiration. To them, and others like them, the world owes a deep debt of gratitude. We ought to be as proud of them as of our great generals and statesmen.

We often hear of "civilised nations," and no doubt some are more civilised than others. But no country is yet even approximately entitled to the name. We must try to make ours a real civilisation, and the establishment of libraries is certainly one step forwards in the right direction.

When Household Suffrage was passed, Lord Sherbrooke remarked that we must educate our masters, but it is even more important to enable them to educate themselves.

There are many whose birth is a sentence of hard labour for life; but it does not follow that their life should on that account be unhappy or uninteresting. Only if they have few amusements, and little variety in

their lives, all the more desirable is it that they should have access to good books.

One of our greatest men of science, Sir John Herschel, has told us that: "Were I to pray for a taste that should stand me in stead under every variety of circumstances, and be a source of happiness and cheerfulness to me during life, and a shield against its ills, however things might go amiss, and the world frown upon me, it would be a taste for reading. Give a man this taste, and the means of gratifying it, and you can hardly fail of making him a happy man; unless, indeed, you put into his hands a most perverse selection of books. You place him in contact with the best society in every period of history, with the wisest, the wittiest, the tenderest, the bravest, and the purest characters which have adorned humanity. You make him a denizen of all nations, a contemporary of all ages. The world has been created for him."

Books are almost living beings. "Books," said Milton, "do contain a progeny of life in them, as active as that soul was whose progeny they are." Great writers at any rate never die.

"He is not dead whose glorious mind

Lifts thine on high.

To live in hearts we leave behind,  
Is not to die."

The Duke of Urbino, who founded the great library in that city, made it a rule that every book should be bound in crimson, ornamented with silver.

Books are the accumulated treasures of by-gone ages. Lamb pointed out that there was more reason for saying grace before a new book, than before a dinner.

When, moreover, we remember how much is spent on drink, certainly no one can accuse us of extravagance on books. How little our libraries cost us as compared with our cellars! Most people look a long time at the best book before they would give the price of a bottle of wine for it. It is rather sad to think that when we speak of a public house, we think of a place for the sale of drink. I am glad, however, to know that on all sides public houses are now arising for the supply, not of beer, but of books.

—*The Use of Life*

## XXXII

### A STUDY OF BENARES

SISTER NIVEDITA

EVEN in great places we cannot always command the passive moments of rare insight. It was already my third visit to Benares when I sat one day, at an hour after noon, in the Vishwanath Bazar. Everything about me was hushed and drowsy. The *sadhu*-like shopkeepers nodded and dozed over their small wares; here the weaving of girdle or scapulary with a *mantram*, there a collection of small stone Shivas. There was little enough of traffic along the narrow footway, but overhead went the swallows by the invisible roadways of the blue, flying in and out among their nests in the eaves. And the air was filled with their twittering, and with the sighing resonance of the great bell in the Temple of Vishweswar, as the constant stream of barefooted worshippers entered, and prayed, and before departing touched it. Swaying, sobbing, there it hung, seeming as if in that hour of peace it were some mystic dome, thrilled and responsive to every throb of the city's life. One could believe that these ripples of sound that ran across it were born of

no mechanical vibration, but echoed, here a moan, there a prayer, and yet again a cry of gladness, in all the distant quarters of Benares: that the bell was even as a great weaver, weaving into unity of music, and throwing back on earth. those broken and tangled threads of joy and pain that without it would have seemed so meaningless and so confused.

A step beyond were the shops of the flower-sellers, who sell white flowers for the worship of Shiva across the threshold. Oh what a task, to spend the whole of life, day after day, in this service only, the giving of the flowers for the image of the Lord! Has there been no soul that, occupied thus, has dreamed and dreamed itself into *Mukti*, through the daily offering?

And so came to me the thought of the old ministers of Europe. and of what it meant to live thus. like the swallows and the townsfolk and the flowers, ever in the shadow of a great cathedral. For that is what Benares is—a city built about the walls of a cathedral.

It is common to say of Benares that it is curiously modern. and there is on the face of it a certain truth in the statement. For the palaces and monasteries and temples that line the banks of the Ganges between the

mouths of Barna and Asi have been built for the most part within the last three hundred years. There is skill and taste enough in India yet to rebuild them all again, if they fell to-morrow. Benares as she stands is in this sense the work of the Indian people as they are to-day.

But never did any city so sing the song of the past. One is always catching a hint of reminiscence in the bazars, in the interior, and in the domestic architecture. Here is the Jammu *Chhattra* for instance, built in the Jaunpur Pathan style, common in Northern India from the twelfth to the fourteenth centuries. Not far off again, we have a glimpse of a roof-balustrade that retains many of the characteristics of an Asokan rail, so clearly is it a wooden fence rendered in stone. I have seen a pillared hall too, in a house looking out upon the Ganges, that might almost have known the two thousand years that its owners claimed for it. And here in the bazar of Vishwanath we are treading still, it may be, that very pathway through the forest that was followed by the Vedic forefathers, when first they saw the sun rise on the East of the great river, and offered the *Hom* where the golden grate of Vishweswar stands to-day, chanting their *riks* in celebration of worship.

Nothing holds its place longer than a road. The winding alleys between the backs of houses and gardens in European cities may, at no distant date, have been paths through meadows and corn-fields. And similarly, in all countries, a footway is apt to be a silent record of unwritten history. But who shall recover the story of this little street, or write the long long poem of the lives, and deaths of those whose feet have passed to and forth along its flagstones in four thousand years?

Truly the city, even as she stands, is more ancient than any superficial critic would suppose. It was here at Sarnath, in the year 583 B.C. or thereabouts, that the great message pealed out whose echoes have never died away in history, "Open ye your ears, O Monks, the deliverance from death is found!" And the importance which the Deer-Park thus assumes in the life of Buddha, both before and after the attainment of Nirvana, sufficiently proves its importance as the university of philosophy of its own age. Three hundred years later Asoka, seeking to build memorials of all the most sacred events in the history of his great Master, was able, as the recent excavations show us, to make a tiny stupa with its rail in some cell, by that time already underground, whose site had been especially sanctified by the

touch of Buddha's feet. We thus learn, not only that the Deer-Park of Benares (so called, probably, because pains were taken to keep it cleared of larger game) was important in the year 583 B.C. and again in 250 B.C., but also that it was sufficiently a centre of resort throughout the intervening period to guarantee its maintenance of an unbroken tradition with regard to points of extremely minute detail. But it was not Sarnath alone that saw the coming and going of Buddha in the birth of the great enlightenment. Nor was it the Abkariyeli Kand alone that had already formed an important religious centre for ages before the early Mohammedan period. The very name of the Dasasvamedhi Ghat and Bazar commemorates a period long enough to have included ten imperial sacrifices, each one of which must have represented at least a reign. Probably throughout the Pataliputra age, that is to say from 350 B.C. to 528 A.D., Benares was the ecclesiastical and sacrificial seat of an empire. It contains at least two Asokan pillars, one in the grounds of the Queen's College, and the other, as we now know, at the entrance to the old-time Monastery of Sarnath. And we know with certainty that in the youth of Buddha it was already a thriving industrial centre. For the robes that he threw aside, perhaps in the year



590 B.C. to adopt the *gerua* of the *sannyāsin*, are said in many books to have been made of Benares silk.

But this is in truth only what we might have expected. For the waterway is always in early ages the chief geographical feature of a country, and the position of Benares at the northward bend of the river determines the point of convergence for all the foot-roads of the South and East, and makes her necessarily the greatest distributing centre in India. Thus she constitutes a palimpsest, not a simple manuscript, of cities. One has here been built upon another; period has accumulated upon period. There are houses in the crowded quarters whose foundations are laid, as it were, in mines of bricks, and whose owners live upon the sale of these ancestral wares. And there is at least one temple that I know of whose floor is eight or ten feet below the level of the present street, and whose date is palpably of the second to the fourth century after Christ.

If then we may compare large things with small, Benares may be called the Canterbury of the Asokan and post-Asokan India. What Delhi became later to the militarised India of the Rajput and the Moslem, that Benares had already been to an earlier India, whose eastern provinces had seen Buddha. At Sarnath the

memory of the great *Sannyasin* was preserved by the devoted members of a religious order, either Buddhist or Jain. At Benares the Brahmans laboured, as citizens and householders, to enforce the lesson that none of his greatness was lacking in the Great God. The Shiva, clad in the tiger-skin and seated in meditation like a Buddha, who is carved in low relief at the entrance to Elephanta in the harbour of Bombay, was the Hindu ideal of the later Buddhist period. And so the Vedic city, through whose streets had passed the Blessed One, became the sacred city of Shiva; and to make and set up his emblem there—the form in stone of the formless God—was held for long ages after the same act of merit that the erecting of votive stupas had so long been in places of Buddhist pilgrimage. Nay, even now old stupas remain of the early Puranic period, and early Shivas of a later phase of development, about the streets and *ghats* of Benares, to tell of the impress made by Buddha on an age that was then already passing away.

But Benares is not only an Indian Canterbury, it is also an Oxford. Under the shadow of temples and monasteries cluster the schools and dwellings of the pundits or learned Sanskritists, and from all parts of India the poor students flock there to study the classics

and ancient rituals of Hinduism. The fame of Nuddea is in her Sanskrit logic, but that of Benares in her philosophy and Brahman lore. Thus she remains ever the central authority on the questions of worship and of the faith, and her influence is carried to all ends of India by every wandering scholar returning to his own province. It is a mediæval type of culture, of course, carried out in the mediæval way. It takes a man twelve years here to exhaust a single book, while under the modern comparative method we are compelled to skim the surfaces of a score or more in a single year. It follows that we have here a study of the contents rather than the relations of a given work; significance rather than co-ordination. But for this very reason the Benares-trained scholar is of his own kind, secure in his type, as fearless in his utterance of that which he knows as those other mediævalists in a modern world; John Bunyan and William Blake.

But in Benares as a culture-centre even in the present generation, though it is fast vanishing, we have another extraordinary advantage to note. Being as she is the authoritative seat of Hinduism and Sanskrit learning, the city stands nevertheless, side by side with Jaunpur, the equally authoritative centre of Mussalman learning

in India. She represents in fact the dividing line between the Sanskrit civilisation of the Hindu provinces and the Persian and Arabic culture of the Mohammedans. And consequently she still has members of a class that once constituted one of the most perfect types of national education in the world. elderly Hindu gentlemen who were trained in their youth not only to read Sanskrit literature, but also to read and enjoy what was then the distinctive accomplishment of royal courts, namely Persian poetry. And the mind that is born of this particular syntheses—rendered possible in Benares by the presence on the one hand of the Hindu pundit and the neighbourhood on the other of the Jaampur *maulvi*—is not that of a great scholar certainly, but it is that of a member of the wide world, polished, courtly, and urbane. One of the most charming forms of high breeding that humanity has known will be lost with the last well-born Hindu who has had the old-time training in Persian. Nor indeed can anyone who has seen modern and mediæval culture side by side, as we may still sometimes see them in Asia, doubt that the true sense of literature is the prerogative of the mediævalist.

Benares, then, is an informal university. And like other universities of the Middle Ages, it has always

supported its scholars and students by a vast network of institutions of mutual aid. It has always supported its scholars and students by a vast network of institutions of mutual aid. It is no disgrace there for a boy to beg his bread, when love of learning has brought him a thousand miles on foot. Nor was it in mediæval Leipzig, or Heidelberg, or Oxford. These are the scholars for whom our schools and colleges were founded. The wives of the burghers expected to contribute to the maintenance of such. And it is in Benares only food that is wanted. In the dark hours of one winter morning, as I made my way through the Bengalitollah to the bathing-ghats, I could hear in the distance the sound of Sanskrit chanting. And soon I came up to a student who had slept all night on the stone verandah of some well-to-do house, screened from the bitterest pinch of cold by carefully-drawn walls of common sacking, and now had risen before five to read by the light of a hurricane lamp and commit to memory his task for the day. Further on another studied, with no such luxuries as canvas walls and paraffin lamp. He had slept all night under his single blanket on the open stone, and the tiny Indian *batti* was the light by which he was reading now.

Here is love of learning with labour and poverty.

It is obviously impossible for these to earn their bread in addition to performing the tasks imposed by their schools. The spontaneous benefactions of rich nobles and merchants were doubtless enough in the Middle Ages—when religious enthusiasm was high, and the problem still limited—to maintain the pundits in whose houses the students lived. But in modern times the institution of the *chhatras* has grown up, and it is said that in the city there are three hundred and sixty-five of these. A *chhatra* is a house at which a given number of persons receive a meal daily. Some give double doles. Some give to others besides Brahmans. Many have been themselves the gifts of pious widows, and a few of kings. But that it is the duty of the city to provide food for her scholars all are agreed. Is not Benares to these children of Shiva Annapurna the Mother, She whose hand is ever “full of grain”?

But Benares is more than the precincts of a group of temples. She is more even than a university, and more than the historic and industrial centre of three thousand years. The solemn Manikarnika stands rightly in the centre of her river-front. For she is a great national *shamshan*, a vast burning-ghat. “He who dies in Benares attains Nirvana.” The words may be nothing.

but an expression of intense affection. Who would not love to die on those beautiful *ghats*, with the breath of the night or the morning on his brow, the sound of temple-bells and chanting in his ears, and the promises of Shiva and memories of the past in his heart? Such a death, embraced in an ecstasy, would it not in itself be *Mukti*, the goal? "Oh Thou great *Jnanam*, that art God, dwell thou in me!" Such was the vision that broke upon one who bent from the flower-seller's balcony to see even song chanted by the Brahmans round the blossom-crowned Vishweswar. And never again can that mind think of God as seated on a throne, with His children kneeling round Him, for to it the secret has been shown that Shiva is within the heart of man, and He is the Absolute Consciousness, the Infinite Knowledge, and the Unconditioned Bliss. Which of us would not die, if we could, in the place that was capable of flashing such a message across the soul?

All India feels this. All India hears the call. And one by one, step by step, with bent head and bare feet for the most part, come those, chiefly widows and *sadhus*, whose lives are turned away from all desire save that of a holy death. How many monuments of *sati* are to be seen in Benares, one on the Manikarnika Ghat, and

many dotted about the fields and roads outside! These are the memorials of triumphant widowhood in the hour of its bereavement. But there are other triumphs. Clothed and veiled in purest white, bathing, fasting, and praying continually, here in the hidden streets of Benares dwell thousands of those whose lives are one long effort to accumulate merit for the beloved second self. And if the scholar be indeed the servant of the nation, is the saint less? The lamp of ideal womanhood, burning in the sheltered spot at the feet of the image, and "not flickering," is this, or is it not, as a light given to the world?

Benares, again, is an epitome of the whole Indian synthesis of nationality. As the new-comer is rowed down the river past the long lines of temples and bathing-ghats, while the history of each is told to him in turn, he feels, catching his breath at each fresh revelation of builded beauty, that all roads in India always must have led to Benares. Here is the monastery of Kedarnath, the headquarters of the southern monks, which represents to the province of Madras all the merits of Himalayan pilgrimage. Here again is the ghat of Ahalya Bai Rani, the wonderful widowed Mahratta Queen, whose temples and roads and tanks remain all



over India to witness to the greatness of the mother heart in rulers. Or behind this we may see the *Math* of Sankaracharya's order, the high caste *Dandis*, whose line is unbroken and orthodoxy unimpeached from the days of their founder, early in the ninth century, till the present hour. Again, we see the palace of the Nagpore Bhonslas (now in the hands of the Maharaja of Darbhanga), connecting Benares with the memory of the Mahratta power, and further on the royal buildings of Gwalior and even of Nepal. Nor is everything here dedicated to Shiva. Shiva's city though it be. For here again we come on the temple of *Beni Madhab*, one of the favourite names of Vishnu. Even Mohammedan sovereigns could not submit to be left out. Secular science is embodied in the beautiful old Man Mandir of Akbar's time, with its instruments and lecture-hall, and the Mussulman faith in the towering minarets of Aurungzeb's mosque.

But what is true of the Ganges front becomes still more clear when we pass behind and consider the city as a whole. Ranjit Singh made no separate building, but he linked Vishweswar irrevocably with Amritsar, when he covered its roof with gold. Zemindars of Bengal, Sirdars of the Punjab, and nobles of Rajputana, all have vied with one another in leaving temples

and shrines, charities and benefactions, dotted over the *Panch Kos*.

Or we may see the same thing industrially. We can buy in Benares, besides her own delicate webs, the saris of Madras and the Dekkan alike. Or we may go to the Vishwanath Bazar for the carpentry of the Punjab. We may find in the same city the brass work of Nasik, of Trichinopoli, and of the Nepalese frontier. It is there, better than anywhere else in India, that we may buy the stone vessels of Gaya, of Jubbulpore, and of Agra, or the Shivas of the Nerbudda and the *salagrans* of the Gumti and Nepal. And the food of every province may be bought in these streets, the language of every race in India heard within these walls.

On questions of religion and of custom, again, in all parts of India, as has been said, the supreme appeal is to Benares. The princes of Gwalior dine only when the news has been telegraphed that the day's food has been offered here. Here too the old works of art and religion, and the old craftsmen practising quaint crafts, linger longest, and may still perchance be found when they have become rare to the point of vanishing everywhere else. Here the *Vyasas* chant authoritative renderings of the epic stories on the ghats. And here at great

banquets food is still considered only secondary to the reciting of the scriptures. Surely it is clear enough that as in the Latin Empire of City and of Church the saying grew up. "All roads lead to Rome," so also in India, so long as she remains India, all roads, all faiths, all periods, and all historical developments will lead us sooner or later back to Benares.

A city in such a position, possessed of such manifold significance, the pilgrim-centre of a continent, must always have had an overwhelming need of strong civic organisation. And that such a need was recognised in the city during the ages of its growth, we may see in many ways. No mediæval township in Europe gives stronger evidence of self-organisation than we find here.

"The mediæval city," says the great European sociologist Kropotkin, "appears as a double federation: of all householders united into small territorial unions—the street, the parish, the section—and of individuals united by oath into guilds, according to their professions; the former being a product of the village-community origin of the city, while the second is a subsequent growth, called into life by new conditions."

This is a master statement which can at once be applied here, if only we dismiss the European idea of

labour as the main *motif* of this city's growth, and substitute the Indian equivalent of religion and learning. Labour is present here of course, and has flourished, as we know, in this spot, during at least three thousand years, but it has never reared its head to become a predominant and independent factor in the growth of Benares. This central significance, this higher element in the federation, has been supplied here, by the presence of priests and pundits, monasteries and poets, bound to each other, not by professional oaths, but by the invisible and spiritual bonds of caste and tradition, and religious bonds—by Hinduism, in short. Not the craftsman, but the Hindu carrying the craftsman with him, has made Benares what she is, and here in this city we have the picture of one of the finest things that the Indian faith—uninterfered with by foreign influences, and commanding the enthusiastic co-operation of the whole nation—could produce. It is no mean achievement. On Benares as it has made it the Hindu genius may well take its stand. By the city of Shiva it may well claim to be judged.

It is, however, when we turn to the first element in Kropotkin's analysis of the city that we find Benares to be most completely illuminated. In a pilgrim-city, we

cannot but think that some mutual organisation of householders for self-defence must have been a prime necessity. The policing of such a city was more than usually important. What were the arrangements made for sanitation, for ambulance, for hospital-service, for the clearing-out of vagrants? These things may not in the Middle Ages have been called by these names, but assuredly their realities existed, and such necessities had to be met. Householders united into small territorial unions—the street, the *para*. And is not Benares filled with small courts and alleys, divided from the main streets by short flights of broad steps, each crowned by its own gate? Is it more than thirty or forty years since each of these had its own guard or *concierge* and was closed at night to be opened again in the morning? In many cases of course the massive doors themselves are now removed, but the pillars and hooks and hinges still remain to bear witness to their old function. In other instances they stand there still pushed back against the wall, and one pauses a moment as one passes to ask, When was this last shut? These portals to each little group of important houses are a silent witness to the order and cleanliness of Benares as the Hindu made it. Just as in Edinburgh, as in Nürnberg, as in Paris, so

here also, the group of wealthy houses thus barred in at a certain hour after dark was responsible for the freedom of its own space from uncleanness and violence. It must undertake the connection between its own sanitation and the underground sewage system of the city, which was similar in character to that of ancient Pataliputra. It must be responsible for the proper alleviation of such suffering as fell within its limits, and its members must duly contribute their full share to the common burdens of the city as a whole. But when we come to the gates of the *pura* or section, of which some still remain guarded by their watchmen outstanding in the bazars, we understand the full importance to the mediæval mind of the question of civic order and of a strong but peaceful civic defence. For here within these gateways, we find the shrines of *Kal Bhairab*, the divine *Kotwal*, who perambulates the city of Shiva night after night, with staff and dog, who is worshipped by sentinels and gate-keepers, and who has the supreme discretion of accepting or rejecting at his will those who fain would enter within the sacred bounds. Of the divine *Kotwal* every city-watchman held himself as minister and earthly representative. And in this worship of *Kal Bhairab*, the Black Demon of Shiva, we may read the whole

history of the civic organisation of Benares in the Middle Ages.

The modern age was later perhaps in arriving, here than elsewhere. But arrive it did, and its work when it came, here as elsewhere, was to multiply problems and to discredit the solutions that had been discovered by slow ages of growth. All that strong rope of self-defence, twisted of so many strands of local combination and territorial responsibility, with which Benares had been wont to meet her own needs, was now done away. The communal sense was stunned by the blow. for the fact was demonstrated to it *ad nauseam* that it was itself powerless against strong central combinations of force. Thus the old self-jurisdiction and self-administration of the civic group was banished. And at the same time the railways connected Benares with every part of India. and made it possible to pour in upon her daily as large a number of diseased, infirm, and starving persons. as may once have reached her on foot or in boats in the course of a year. Thus a forest of needs has grown up in modern Benares, of which the past generations with their common sense. their spontaneous kindliness, and their thrifty municipal management, knew nothing.

Poor working-folk come. when the last hope has

failed them, trusting that the Great God will be their refuge in his own city. In the old days, when Benares was a wealthy capital, these would have made their way to some house or *para* inhabited by well-to-do townsfolk from their own district, and through their kind offices work would sooner or later have been found. But now they find themselves amongst strangers. The music of temple-bells is the only sound familiar to them. Priests and fellow-worshippers are alike unknown. And it may be that in the sanctuary-city they have but fled from one despair to another.

Or the poor student comes here to learn. In the old days he would have found house-room as well as food in the home of his *guru*, or of some wealthy patron, and if he fell ill, he would have been cared for there, as a member of the family. To-day the number of so-called students is great, and possibly amongst them the indolent are many. For certainly temptations must have multiplied, at the same time that the moral continuity of the old relation between distant homestead and metropolitan *para* has been lost. In any case, even amongst the most earnest, some of these poor students have, as we have seen, to live in the streets. And when illness overtakes such there is none to aid, for there is none even to know.



The *chhatras* are certainly a wonderful institution, showing the unexpected power of this ancient city to meet the needs of her own children. But the *chhatras* cannot offer home and hospital. And these also are sometimes needed.

And finally there is the case of the widowed gentlewomen who come to Benares to pray for their dead. As with others, so here also there is in many cases but slender provision. And yet nowadays they cannot come to friends, but must needs hire a room and pay rent to a landlord. Nor can we venture to pass too harsh a verdict on the capitalist who evicts his tenant—though a woman and delicately nurtured—when the rent has fallen too long into arrears. For he probably has to deal with the fact on such a scale that the course is forced upon him, if he will save himself from ruin. More striking even than this is that fear of the police, which we find everywhere amongst the helpless, and which drives the keeper of the apartment-house to dismiss its penniless inmates when near to death, lest he should afterwards be arraigned in court for having stolen their provision!

Prostrate, then, under the disintegrating touch of the Modern Era, lies at this moment the most perfect of

mediaeval cities. Is she to become a memory to her children after four thousand or many years of a constant growth? Or will there prove to be some magic in the new forces of enthusiasm that are running through the veins of the nation, that shall yet make itself potent to renew her ancient life-streams also?

—*Footfalls of Indian History*

### XXXIII

## CULTURE AND CHARACTER

LORD OXFORD

My first duty is to thank you most gratefully for the honour which the students of this University have done me in electing me to be their Rector, and to express my sincere regret that the pressure of other duties has delayed so long my visit to Aberdeen. The office to which you have elected me is associated with some of the most splendid traditions in the history of learning. It goes back to the time when the Church and the Empire, in theory at any rate, exercised an unchallenged supremacy over the spiritual and temporal concerns of the Western World. Three out of our four Scottish Universities are of Papal foundation. Aberdeen, the youngest of the three, owes its origin in 1494, as you all know, to a Bull of Alexander VI, which may, I suppose, be regarded as a redeeming act in the career of one of the most infamous of the Popes. It was, at any rate, the final gift of the Papacy to learning and the humanities in this island. For of the two great disruptive forces—the Renaissance and the Reformation—which within the next

half-century undermined and overthrew the spiritual and ecclesiastical unity of Europe, the one had already begun its invasion of Great Britain, and both in England and Scotland, by diverse routes, the way was being prepared for the triumph of the other. But in neither country ought we to erase from the national memory the debt of obligation which British learning owes to the great Churchmen of the Middle Ages—a debt which, I am glad to know, we here in Aberdeen are about to recognise by a fitting commemoration of our real founder, Bishop Elphinstone.

When we look back to the way in which organised education has been developed in Western Europe, and particularly in Great Britain, we are struck by the fact that it apparently began at the top of the scale with the more advanced forms of teaching. In point of time you have first the Universities, then what we call in England the public schools and the grammar schools and, finally, the parish school, which the whole English-speaking world owes, in so large a degree, to the insight and foresight of John Knox. We must, however, not be misled into wrong inferences, which may easily be drawn from a superficial survey of the facts. The mediæval University was never intended to be, and was not in fact, an

aristocratic or exclusive institution, which opened its doors and offered its teaching only to the children of the well-to-do. As I tried to show some years ago, when on a similar occasion to this I was addressing your fellow-students at Glasgow, the typical University of the Middle Ages, whether at Paris, or Bologna, or Oxford, was cosmopolitan in composition; to some extent at any rate—as this institution of the Rectorship proves—democratic in government, and recruited by students drawn from all ranks and classes, but for the most part the sons of low-born or needy parents. University education was then—except, of course, for the few who pursue learning for learning's sake, and who are, at all times, in every home of learning, a minority of a minority—the most accredited qualification for admission to, and for the practice of, certain indispensable and much-frequented professions—in particular, the Law, and the higher branches of Medicine, and the Church.

As time went on, and the so-called ages of Chivalry were submerged by the Renaissance, what we now describe as culture, in the academic sense, came to be looked on as the proper and necessary accomplishment of a gentleman. It is true (as Mr. Sidney Lee has pointed out in the learned and interesting book, which

he has just published, on the French Renaissance in England) that the process was slower in this island than elsewhere. More, Colet, Linacre, and their teacher and friend Erasmus, sowed the seed which did not ripen for harvest until Elizabeth had been more than twenty years on the throne. But the illustrious Queen herself, according to the unimpeachable testimony of the younger Scaliger, was better educated than all her contemporaries among the great of the earth, being familiar with no less than five languages in addition to her native tongue—Latin and Greek, French, German, and Italian. I hesitate to trespass, even for a moment, upon thorny ground, but with all the progress that female education has made in the last three centuries, can it produce a more conspicuous example of the combination of culture and capacity?

Culture, as I have said, came to be looked upon, like good manners and good clothes, as part of the social and personal equipment of the well-born and well-to-do. It continued also, in its more specialised forms, to be the recognised avenue to eminence in the learned professions and the Church. But the notion that education was for the common man a part of his natural heritage, a necessary condition of his civic usefulness, an ingredient.

that could be safely mixed with the drudgery of manual toil and the simple round of homely pleasure—except, indeed, to some extent in Scotland—such a notion would have been everywhere dismissed as a dangerous paradox.

It is a little more than a hundred years since an eminent prelate of the Church of England declared that all that the people of a country had to do with its laws was to obey them. It was in the same spirit, and from the same point of view, that the mass of the population was expected to leave letters to their betters. The growth of enlightenment, a stimulated sense of social community and corporate duty, and it must be added, the advent of democracy, have brought about, without violence, and by general consent, the most revolutionary of all the changes of our time—a national system of free and compulsory teaching. The celebrated sarcasm of Mr. Lowe, that we must begin to “educate our masters,” has been translated into practice; and though there are still plenty of ragged edges and ugly gaps in the actual working of the machinery, the ideal, at any rate, is universally accepted, that no child shall start upon the work of life unfurnished with the keys of learning, and that, in the case of every child whom nature has gifted with brains and ambition, the barriers of fortune and circumstances shall no longer

block its progress, at any stage of the way which leads to the innermost courts of the palace of knowledge. This is not an appropriate time or place to discourse, as I might otherwise be tempted to do, on the lights—and shadows—of popular education. It will be more to the purpose if I ask your patience for a few desultory and discursive thoughts on some of the shortcomings and drawbacks which seem in these days to threaten the academic pursuit of the higher forms of knowledge.

I would instance, first, the growing tendency to Specialism, which has become a marked feature of University work, both here and in England, during the past fifty or sixty years. It is much more common than it used to be for a student to give exclusive, or almost exclusive, devotion to one subject or group of subjects, and to be content as regards the rest with the bare minimum of academic requirement. The change is, of course, largely due to the greater thoroughness with which each subject is taught and learnt; to the enormous extension in the area of the fields of research, which are still called by the old names—classics, mathematics, science, philosophy; to the higher standard, both of information and of exactness, which has naturally and legitimately been set up. All this is to the good, in so



far as it tends to promote erudition and accuracy at the expense of that which is merely superficial and smart. But the advantage is purchased at an excessive price if it is gained by the sacrifice of width of range and catholicity of interest. Pedantry is, on the whole, more useful and less offensive than Sciolism, but a University which is content to perform the office of a factory of specialists is losing sight of some of its highest functions.

Nobody but an impostor can in these days assume to take all knowledge for his province. Such an encyclopædic purpose as inspired Francis Bacon, even he, perhaps the most gifted of our race, if he could be reincarnated under modern conditions, would recognise to be now beyond the dreams of intellectual ambition. But the man whom you turn out here as your finished product at the end of his University course ought to be, in Bacon's own phrase, "a full man." Victor Hugo says somewhere, in his grandiose and impressive way, that genius is a promontory which stretches out into the Infinite. We cannot lay down laws for genius; that incommunicable gift sets at nought both heredity and environment. But, genius apart, there is much to be said for the old University ideal of the "all-round" man—not the superficial smatterer, who knows something about

everything and much about nothing—but one who has not sacrificed to the pursuit of a single dominating interest his breadth of outlook, the zest and range of his intellectual curiosity, his eagerness to know and to assimilate the best that has been and is being thought and written and said about all the things that either contribute to the knowledge or enrich the life of man.

But, next, if a certain width of range is essential to the reality of academic culture, it is equally true that, in external form and expression, it is, or ought to be, marked by precision, aptitude, harmony—by the qualities, in a word, which combine to make up what we call Style. In all artistic production there are three factors—the subject, the form in which it is presented, and the vehicle by which the presentation is effected. In each of the separate arts—painting, sculpture, architecture, music—the particular vehicle controls and limits the choice of subject. But given appropriate subject and apt vehicle—and there is nothing in which the insight of genius is better tested than in the mating of the two—it is the formative capacity of the artist which determines the value of the product. That sounds like a platitude when we are talking of the fine arts; but it is strange how careless of form even highly educated people show them-

## LECTIONS IN PROSE

Commonplace everyday acts of speaking and a vast deal of the slipshod and prolix stuff which we are compelled to read or to listen to is, of course, born of sheer idleness. When, as so often happens, a man takes an hour to say what might have been as well or better said in twenty minutes, or spreads over twenty pages what could easily have been exhausted in ten, the offence in a large majority of cases is due, not so much to vanity, or to indifference to the feelings of others, as to inability or unwillingness to take pains.

And the uncritical world, just as it is apt to mistake noise of utterance for firmness of character, has an almost invincible tendency to think that a writer or orator cannot be eloquent unless he is also diffuse. In my opinion, it ought to be regarded as one of the serious functions of a University to inculcate the importance and to cultivate the practice of Style. Remember that in the English language we have received, as part of our common inheritance, the richest and most flexible organ of expression among living tongues. I say nothing for the moment of Poetry, which may be classed among the arts; but there is no department of the Prose, which we all have to speak and write every day of our lives, for

which our literature does not provide us with a wealth of models and examples. There are fashions in style, as in other things, which have their day, exhaust themselves, and cannot be revived. No one, for instance, would nowadays set himself deliberately to copy the manner of Archbishop Crammer, the first great writer of English prose; or of Sir Thomas Browne, with his magnificent organ of many notes; or of Gibbon, who stands in solitary splendour at the head of our writers of history; or of De Quincey, with his curious and sometimes irritating medley, imaginative, critical, discursive, but a master who has rarely been surpassed in the manipulation of the English sentence. Mechanical reproduction may be useful as an exercise; it was resorted to, if I remember right, in his youth by the most accomplished practitioner in the art of style that Scotland has produced in our time—Robert Louis Stevenson. But the man who wants to write or speak English will go to the great authors, whom I have just named, again and again; not to echo their cadences or to mimic their mannerisms; not merely even to enrich his own vocabulary; but to study the secret of their music; to learn how it is that, with them, language becomes the mirror of thought; to master, step by step, the processes by

which these cunning artificers in words forge out of them phrases, sentences, paragraphs, and give to each its proper place and function in the structure of an immortal work.

But, further, it is not enough that a University should teach its students to eschew narrowness in the range of their intellectual interests and slatternliness in speech and writing. It should put them permanently on guard against the Dogmatic temper. We cannot get on without dogma, which is nothing more than the precisely formulated expression of what we believe to be true. The term is sometimes used as though it were restricted to the domain of theology, and were specially appropriate to the accretions—called by some excrescences, by others developments—which councils and schoolmen and doctors have embroidered upon the simplicity of the Gospel. But science and philosophy have their dogmas also; and if it be suggested that that which differentiates a dogma is that it is accepted in deference, not to reason but to authority, the same may be said of not a few of the propositions which in every department both of speculation and of practical life form the basis of belief or conduct. But to give intellectual acceptance to a dogma, or a series of dogmas, is one thing; to carry on

the operations of the intellect in a dogmatic spirit is quite another. There is a famous and familiar saying of Lessing, that if the Almighty offered him the choice between the knowledge of all truth and the impulse to seek the truth, he would reverently select the second as a greater boon than the first. And this surely is the attitude which it should be the aim and end of education to make easy and natural. To be open-minded; to struggle against preconceptions, and hold them in due subjection; to keep the avenues of the intelligence free and unblocked; to take pains that the scales of the judgment shall be always even and fair; to welcome new truths when they have proved their title, despite the havoc they may make of old and cherished beliefs—these may sound like commonplace qualities, well within every man's reach, but experience shows that in practice they are the rarest of all.

The temper which I am endeavouring to describe is not in any sense one of intellectual detachment or indifference; nor has it anything in common with that chronic paralysis of the judgment, which makes some men incapable of choosing between the right and wrong reason, or the better and the worse cause. It implies, on the contrary, an active and virile mental life, equipped

against the fallacies of the market-place and the cave, animated by the will to believe and to act, but open always to the air of reason and the light of truth.

One final counsel I will venture to offer to you. I speak as an old University man who, in a crowded and somewhat contentious life, has never wholly lost touch with the interests and the ideals of Oxford days. If the short span which, in fuller or lesser measure, is allotted to us all is to be wisely spent, one must not squander, but one should husband and invest, what never comes again, and what here and now is offered to every one of you. The more strenuous your career, the more you will need to draw upon that unfailing reservoir. Sometimes, amid the clash of public strife, there may steal back into the memory of some of us the sombre lines of the greatest of Roman poets:

*Di Jovis in tectis iram miserantur inanem*

*Amborum, et tantos mortalibus esse labores.*

That is but a passing mood, except in an ill-furnished mind. Keep always with you, wherever your course may lie, the best and most enduring gift that a University can bestow—the company of great thoughts, the inspiration of great ideals, the example of great achievements, the consolation of great failures. So equipped, you can

face, without perturbation, the buffets of circumstance, the caprice of fortune, all the inscrutable vicissitudes of life. Nor can you do better than take as your motto the famous words which I read over the portals of this College when I came here to-day: "They have said. What say they? Let them say."

—*Occasional Addresses*



## XXXIV REALITY

HILAIRE BELLOC

A COUPLE of generations ago there was a sort of man going mournfully about who complained of the spread of education. He had an ill-ease in his mind. He feared that book learning would bring us no good, and he was called a fool for his pains. Not undeservedly—for his thoughts were muddled, and if his heart was good it was far better than his head. He argued badly or he merely affirmed, but he had strong allies (Ruskin was one of them), and, like every man who is sincere, there was something in what he said; like every type which is numerous, there was a human feeling behind him: and he was very numerous.

Now that he is pretty well extinct we are beginning to understand what he meant and what there was to be said for him. The greatest of the French Revolutionists was right—"After bread, the most crying need of the populace is knowledge." But what knowledge?

The truth is that secondary impressions, impressions gathered from books and from maps, are valuable as

adjuncts to primary impressions (that is, impressions gathered through the channel of our senses), or, what is always almost as good, and sometimes better, the interpreting voice of the living man. For you must allow me the paradox that in some mysterious way the voice and gesture of a living witness always convey something of the real impression he has had, and sometimes convey more than we should have received ourselves from our own sight and hearing of the thing related.

Well, I say, these secondary impressions are valuable as adjuncts to primary impressions. But when they stand absolute and have hardly any reference to primary impressions, then they may deceive. When they stand not only absolute but clothed with authority, and when they pretend to convince us even against our own experience, they are positively undoing the work which education was meant to do. When we receive them merely as an enlargement of what we know and make of the unseen things of which we read, things in the image of the seen, then they quite distort our appreciation of the world.

Consider so simple a thing as a river. A child learns its maps and knows, or thinks it knows, that such and such rivers characterize such and such nations and

their territories. Paris stands upon the River Seine. Rome upon the River Tiber. New Orleans on the Mississippi, Toledo upon the River Tagus, and so forth. That child will know one river, the river near his home. And he will think of all those other rivers in its image. He will think of the Tagus and the Tiber and the Seine and the Mississippi—and they will all be the rivers near his home. Then let him travel, and what will he come across? The Seine, if he is from these islands, may not disappoint him or astonish him with a sense of novelty and of ignorance. It will indeed look grander and more majestic, seen from the enormous forest heights above its lower course, than what, perhaps, he had thought possible in a river, but still it will be a river of water out of which a man can drink, with clear-cut banks and with bridges over it, and with boats that ply up and down. But let him see the Tagus at Toledo, and what he finds is brown rolling mud, pouring solid after the rains, or sluggish and hardly a river after long drought. Let him go down the Tiber, down the Valley of the Tiber, on foot, and he will retain until the last miles an impression of nothing but a turbid mountain torrent, mixed with the friable soil in its bed. Let him approach the Mississippi in the most part of its long course and the novelty will

be more striking still. It will not seem to him a river at all (if he be from Northern Europe); it will seem a chance flood. He will come to it through marshes and through swamps, crossing a deserted backwater, finding firm land beyond, then coming to further shallow patches of wet, out of which the tree-stumps stand, and beyond which again mud-heaps and banks and groups of reeds leave undetermined, for one hundred yards after another, the limits of the vast stream. At last, if he has a boat with him, he may make some place where he has a clear view right across to low trees, tiny from their distance, similarly half swamped upon a further shore, and behind them a low escarpment of bare earth. That is the Mississippi nine times out of ten, and to an Englishman who had expected to find from his early reading or his maps a larger Thames it seems for all the world like a stretch of East Anglian flood, save that it is so much more desolate.

The maps are coloured to express the claims of Governments. What do they tell you of the social truth? Go on foot or bicycling through the more populated upland belt of Algiers and discover the curious mixture of security and war which no map can tell you of and which none of the geographies make you understand.

The excellent roads, trodden by men that cannot make a road; the walls as ready loopholed for fighting; the Christian church and the mosque in one town; the necessity for and the hatred of the European; the indescribable difference of the sun. which here, even in winter, has something malignant about it, and strikes as well as warms; the mountains odd, unlike our mountains; the forests, which stand as it were by hardihood, and seem at war against the influence of dryness and the desert winds, with their trees far apart, and between them no grass, but bare earth alone.

So it is with the reality of arms and with the reality of the sea. Too much reading of battles has ever unfitted men for war; too much talk of the sea is a poison in these great town populations of ours which know nothing of the sea. Who that knows anything of the sea will claim certitude in connexion with it? And yet there is a school which has by this time turned its mechanical system almost into a commonplace upon our lips, and talks of that most perilous thing, the fortunes of a fleet, as though it were a merely numerical and calculable thing! The greatest of Armadas may set out and not return.

There is one experience of travel and of the physical realities of the world which has been so widely repeated, and which men have so constantly verified that I could mention it as a last example of my thesis without fear of misunderstanding. I mean the quality of a great mountain.

To one that has never seen a mountain it may seem a full and fine piece of knowledge to be acquainted with its height in feet exactly, its situation; nay, many would think themselves learned if they know no more than its conventional name. But the thing itself! The curious sense of its isolation from the common world, of its being the habitation of awe, perhaps the brooding-place of a god!

I had seen many mountains, I had travelled in many places, and I had read many particular details in the books—and so well noted them upon the maps that I could have re-drawn the maps—concerning the Cerdagne. None the less the sight of that wall of the Cerdagne, when first it struck me, coming down the pass from Tourcarol, was as novel as though all my life had been spent upon empty plains. By the map it was 9,000 feet. It might have 90,000! The wonderment as to what lay beyond, the sense that it was a limit to known things,

its savage intangibility, its sheer silence! Nothing but the eye seeing could give one all those things.

The old complain that the young will not take advice. But the wisest will tell them that, save blindly and upon authority, the young cannot take it. For most of human and social experience is words to the young, and the reality can come only with years. The wise complain of the jingo in every country; and properly, for he upsets the plans of statesmen, miscalculates the value of national forces, and may, if he is powerful enough, destroy the true spirit of armies. But the wise would be wiser still if, while they blamed the extravagance of this sort of man, they would recognize that it came from that half-knowledge of mere names and lists which excludes reality. It is maps and newspapers that turn an honest fool into a jingo.

It is so again with distance, and it is so with time. Men will not grasp distance unless they have traversed it, or unless it be represented to them vividly by the comparison of great landscapes. Men will not grasp historical time unless the historian shall be at the pains to give them what historians so rarely give, the measure of a period in terms of a human life. It is from secondary impressions divorced from reality that a

contempt for the past arises, and that the fatal illusion of some gradual process of betterment of "progress" vulgarizes the minds of men and wastes their effort. It is from secondary impressions divorced from reality that a society imagines itself diseased when it is healthy, or healthy when it is diseased. And it is from secondary impressions divorced from reality that springs the amazing power of the little second-rate public man in those modern machines that think themselves democracies. This last is a power which, luckily, cannot be greatly abused, for the men upon whom it is thrust are not capable even of abuse upon a great scale. It is none the less marvellous in its falsehood.

Now you will say at the end of this: Since you blame so much the power for distortion and for ill residing in our great towns, in our system of primary education and in our papers and in our books, what remedy can you propose? Why, none, either immediate or mechanical. The best and the greatest remedy is a true philosophy, which shall lead men always to ask themselves what they really know and in what order of certitude they know it; where authority actually resides and where it is usurped. But, apart from the advent, or rather the recapture, of a true philosophy by a European



society, two forces are at work which will always bring reality back, though less swiftly and less whole. The first is the poet, and the second is Time.

Sooner or later Time brings the empty phrase and the false conclusion up against what is; the empty imaginary looks reality in the face and the truth at once conquers. In war a nation learns whether it is strong or no, and how it is strong and how weak: it learns it as well in defeat as in victory. In the long processes of human lives, in the succession of generations, the real necessities and nature of a human society destroy any false formula upon which it was attempted to conduct it. Time must always ultimately teach.

The poet, in some way it is difficult to understand (unless we admit that he is a seer), is also very powerful as the ally of such an influence. He brings out the inner part of things and presents them to men in such a way that they cannot refuse but must accept it. But how the mere choice and rhythm of words should produce so magical an effect no one has yet been able to comprehend, and least of all the poets themselves.

—*First and Last*

## XXXV

### THE QUEEN'S BEREAVEMENT

LYTTON STRACHEY

EARLY in 1861 the Duchess of Kent was taken seriously ill. and in March she died. The event overwhelmed Victoria. With a morbid intensity, she filled her diary for pages with minute descriptions of her mother's last hours, her dissolution, and her corpse. interspersed with vehement apostrophes, and the agitated outpourings of emotional reflection. In the grief of the present the disagreements of the past were totally forgotten. It was the horror and the mystery of Death—Death present and actual—that seized upon the imagination of the Queen. Her whole being, so instinct with vitality, recoiled in agony from the grim spectacle of the triumph of that awful power. Her own mother, with whom she had lived so closely and so long that she had become a part almost of her existence, had fallen into nothingness before her very eyes! She tried to forget it, but she could not. Her lamentations continued with a strange abundance. a strange persistency. It was

almost as if, by some mysterious and unconscious pre-cognition, she realised that for her, in an especial manner, that grisly Majesty had a dreadful dart in store.

For indeed, before the year was out, a far more terrible blow was to fall upon her. Albert, who had for long been suffering from sleeplessness, went, on a cold and drenching day towards the end of November, to inspect the buildings for the new Military Academy at Sandhurst. On his return, it was clear that the fatigue and exposure to which he had been subjected had seriously affected his health. He was attacked by rheumatism, his sleeplessness continued, and he complained that he felt thoroughly unwell. Three days later a painful duty obliged him to visit Cambridge. The Prince of Wales, who had been placed at that University in the previous year, was behaving in such a manner that a parental visit and a parental admonition had become necessary. The disappointed father, suffering in mind and body, carried through his task; but, on his return journey to Windsor, he caught a fatal chill. During the next week he gradually grew weaker and more miserable. Yet, depressed and enfeebled as he was, he continued to work. It so happened that at that very moment a grave diplomatic crisis had arisen. Civil war had broken out

in America, and it seemed as if England, owing to a violent quarrel with the Northern States, was upon the point of being drawn into the conflict. A severe despatch by Lord John Russel was submitted to the Queen; and the Prince perceived that, if it were sent off unaltered, war would be the almost inevitable consequence. At seven o'clock on the morning of December 1 he rose from his bed, and with a quavering hand wrote a series of suggestions for the alteration of the draft, by which its language might be softened, and a way left open for a peaceful solution of the question. These changes were accepted by the Government, and war was averted. It was the Prince's last memorandum.

He had always declared that he viewed the prospect of death with equanimity. "I do not cling to life," he had once said to Victoria. "You do; but I set no store by it." And then he had added: "I am sure, if I had a severe illness, I should give up at once, I should not struggle for life. I have no tenacity of life." He had judged correctly. Before he had been ill many days he told a friend that he was convinced that he would not recover. He sank and sank. Nevertheless, if the case had been properly understood and skilfully treated from the first, he might conceivably have been saved; but the

doctors failed to diagnose his symptoms; and it is noteworthy that his principal physician was Sir James Clark. When it was suggested that other advice should be taken Sir James pooh-poohed the idea: "there was no cause for alarm," he said. But the strange illness grew worse. At last, after a letter of fierce remonstrance from Palmerston, Dr. Watson was sent for; and Dr. Watson saw at once that he had come too late. The Prince was in the grip of typhoid fever. "I think that everything so far is satisfactory," said Sir James Clark.

The restlessness and the acute suffering of the earlier days gave place to a settled torpor and an ever-deepening gloom. Once the failing patient asked for music—"a fine chorale at a distance;" and a piano having been placed in the adjoining room, Princess Alice played on it some of Luther's hymns, after which the Prince repeated "The Rock of Ages." Sometimes his mind wandered; sometimes the distant past came rushing upon him; he heard the birds in the early morning, and was at Rosenau again a boy. Or Victoria would come and read to him *Peveril of the Peak*, and he showed that he could follow the story, and then she would bend over him, and he would murmur "Liebes Frauchen" and "Gutes Weibchen," stroking her cheek. Her distress

and her agitation were great. but she was not seriously frightened. Buoyed up by her own abundant energies, she would not believe that Albert's might prove unequal to the strain. She refused to face such a hideous possibility. She declined to see Dr. Watson. Why should she? Had not Sir James Clark assured her that all would be well? Only two days before the end, which was seen now to be almost inevitable by everyone about her, she wrote, full of apparent confidence, to the King of the Belgians: "I do not sit up with him at night," she said, "as I could be of no use; and there is nothing to cause alarm." The Princess Alice tried to tell her the truth, but her hopefulness would not be daunted. On the morning of December 14 Albert, just as she had expected, seemed to be better; perhaps the crisis was over. But in the course of the day there was a serious relapse. Then at last she allowed herself to see that she was standing on the edge of an appalling gulf. The whole family were summoned, and, one after another, the children took a silent farewell of their father. "It was a terrible moment," Victoria wrote in her diary, "but, thank God! I was able to command myself, and to be perfectly calm, and remained sitting by his side . . ." He murmured something, but she

could not hear what it was; she thought he was speaking in French. Then all at once he began to arrange his hair, "just as he used to do when well and he was dressing." "Es ist Kleines Frauchen," she whispered to him: and he seemed to understand. For a moment, towards the evening, she went into another room but was immediately called back: she saw at a glance that a ghastly change had taken place. As she knelt by the bed, he breathed deeply, breathed gently, breathed at last no more. His features became perfectly rigid. She shrieked—one long, wild shriek that rang through the terror-stricken Castle—and understood that she had lost him for ever.

—*Queen Victoria*

XXXVI  
RAJPUTANA AND THE RAJPUTS

JEYPORE

SIR EDWIN ARNOLD

IF the country around Delhi and along the banks of the Jumna must be called the classic district of India. Rajputana is her land of romance and chivalry—the region where Nature, Art. and a high-bred race of warriors have combined to render every aspect of the province attractive. Here we arrive in an India different in many marked ways from the British Indian provinces. The Central Districts and Rajputana, with the Sikh States and Bahawalpore, form a still independent part of the Peninsula, where old Indian manners and customs hold sway still. Rajputana is especially interesting in this regard. It is the land of the “king’s children,” of those proud and warlike people the commonest among whom claims royal descent, and bears himself like a soldier and a prince. A poor Rajput yeoman holds himself as good a gentleman as the richest zemindar of Bengal or the North-West. He calls his king Bapji. “my



father," and in many a point preserves quite as lordly a demeanour. In the clan all are peers and brothers, and marriages within it are regarded as unlawful.

As one draws nigh the long vale in which the city of Jeypore is embosomed, ranges of hills rise abruptly from the level fields, sharply ridged, and deeply cloven with glens and hollows. Streams wander downwards from their sides, which in the wet season become picturesque waterfalls, and fill the nullahs to their brims. Upon the plains through which they wind, antelopes roam in herds, constantly visible from the passing train; and the red-headed crane stalks about. The peacock, sacred to gods and men, spreads his jewelled train upon every village wall, and forages unmolested with his family of peahens in every patch of cultivation. The little villages; the fields divided by mud-banks, topped with tiger grass; the slinger upon the machau (platform) frightening away the parrots from the grain; the wandering caravans of traders; the lonely Rajput rider with his round shield and lance; the dark-eyed, graceful women, and the fearless-looking, handsome men, are all much as they stand described in the ancient writings. For Rajputana is measurelessly old. The bluest blood of Europe is but of yesterday compared with that of the

haughty families of this region. The five great Pandu Brothers of the *Mahabharata* were Rajputs, and wandered over the face of these dry plains and marbled hills. The first ancestor of the Rajput kings ruling these valleys was Surya, the Sun himself, who was the father of Rama Chundra, the hero of the Ramayana, and an incarnation of Vishnu. The princes whom we shall visit hereabouts call themselves, and are familiarly styled, Surya-vansa, the "Children of the Sun." The unbroken pedigree of the Maharajah of Jeypore goes back through one hundred and thirty-nine names to Kusa, who was the second son of Rama. Even the haughty Emperor of Delhi bestowed on Jey Singh, the renowned astronomer, king of the land, the title Sawai, meaning "one and a quarter"—still borne by Jeypore princes—as if these immemorial Houses of Rajputana, and their lords, exceeded by a fourth the standard of human pride and prowess. It was esteemed extraordinary condescension when a Rajput princess espoused a Great Mogul in the zenith of his power.

Of the martial qualities of the race Indian annals are so full that volumes of stirring verse could be written about the daring deeds and boundless loyalty of the Rajput clansmen. It was at Chittore, near Udaipore,

in these same highlands, that fifteen thousand Rajput women committed the *johur*, or wholesale suicide, to save their honour. And when Dulhai Rao promised the front post in all future battles to the Rajput chief who should first enter a certain besieged town, the leader of one clan was found in the hour of victory impaled upon the elephant spikes at its north gate, and the dead body of another was flung by his own men over the battlement, at the south side, so eager were those dauntless Rajputs, or "king's children," to sustain their name and to conquer or die for the *Surya-vansa*. I had myself put into verse a touching story of Rajput fidelity, which I twice recited in India among the "king's children," and on each occasion with the effect of awakening an extraordinary emotion of patriotism and satisfaction.

#### JEYPORE CITY

Were the capital of such a land of the ordinary Indian type it would be interesting, but Jeypore is a city that might be built in his dreams by some poet. There is nothing like it in India or the world; and although not at all ancient—for the present metropolis was founded by Jey Singh in 1728—it no doubt reproduces many traditional features of the old times, and well suits

the romantic chronicles of the country by its extraordinary beauty of aspect and site. The rose-red city of Jeypore, with its beautiful streets and fairy-like palaces, is shut within a fence of high seven-gated walls, just as the Rajput ladies of proud degree are screened from view by latticed windows and jealous portals. But you turn from the open space before, say, the Amber Gateway, where camels are loading, and suddenly there opens on the well-pleased but astonished gaze the view of a busy thoroughfare matchless and beautiful; in general effect, indeed, almost beyond description. The entire city from this first point of view is of one and the same tint—a delicate rosy red, mingled with white. If a conqueror could dream of building a capital with pink marble or coral, this is how it would look! It is an endless view of rosy house-fronts, bathed in soft sunlight, nowhere ungraceful in style of building, and at many spots on either side of the way rise stately fronts of palaces and long lines of light buildings embellished with columns and domes. The splendid street, thus entered, runs on a perfect level from east to west, more than two miles, always of the same grand breadth of one hundred and eleven feet, and so absolutely straight that throughout its entire length each house, each palace,

each trader's shop. can be seen on either side, fading away in the long view of rose-red to the fortified Ruby Gate in the far distance. A gay and bustling crowd of citizens gives life to the charming scene, which is backed by mountains rising nobly to the pure blue sky, almost every peak of them covered with some commanding fort or lovely pleasure-house. Two main roadways, of the same rosy colour from end to end. and each of them as wide as the great central street, cross it at right angles, forming at the points of meeting two spacious squares called the "Amber Chauk" and the "Ruby Chauk." These streets are each a mile and a quarter long, and have the same beautiful rosy lines of dwellings and shops, broken in a similar way by buildings of the strangest fancy, rightly ornamented.

All the north side of the great street between the two squares is occupied by an enormous and astonishing palace, which covers, with its gardens and zenanas, a seventh portion of the entire city. Near this rises from the busy street an edifice called the Hawa Mahal, or "Hall of the Winds," a vision of dainty loveliness, nine stories of rosy masonry and delicate overhanging balconies and latticed windows, soaring with tier after tier of fanciful architecture like a pyramid, a mountain,

of airy beauty, through the thousand pierced screens and gilded arches of which the Indian air blows cool over the flat roofs of the very highest houses.

### THE JEYPORE TIGERS

On the dawn-lit hills above stands a temple of the Sun, looking down into the Gulta, a deep pass through the hills filled with shrines and fountains; and if you drive through the rosy street which opens opposite, the Indian style of it all is well maintained by a low one-storied building, containing a row of strongly barred cages. Here, full upon the open square, as if it were part of the natural belongings of a Rajput capital, are confined eight man-eating tigers, criminals of the neighbouring jungles and hills, taken in the act, and imprisoned as State captives. The huge striped beasts crouch at the bars, savagely glaring forth upon the moving crowds outside, too busy with pleasure and traffic to notice them. Each tiger has tasted deep of human blood—one monstrous brute, lying in the hot sunlight on his back, has devoured seven, another ten human beings, and the tigress growling in the last den is declared by her custodian to be known to have slaughtered and consumed fifteen men, women, and children. Most of

such malefactors would elsewhere be shot. but these, after much patience, have been snared in pitfalls, where the tiger is left until hunger has reduced him to extreme weakness, upon which the captors manage to draw him forth and shut him up in a lifelong imprisonment.

### JEYPORE MANUFACTURES

To Surgeon-Major Hendley, an officer of high and varied accomplishments, Indian art and the sciences in general owe a very deep debt. Not only does this gentleman superintend the hospitals and dispensaries of the State—more than twenty in number—extending the benefit of the best medicine and surgery to nearly ninety thousand patients in the past year, but he supervises a first-class observatory established near his residence. Dr. Handley has, further, gathered into the museum an interesting and valuable collection of objects illustrating Indian arts, industries and antiquities. Here are textiles, carpets, sculptures, coins, brass-work, pottery, lacquer carvings, glass, enamelling, jewellery, and natural products, which have been visited in the last five years by over a million Indians. In the “Albert Hall” Dr. Handley had bands of native artificers busy at their various crafts. The wood-carvers were squatting round

large beams and planks of teak, finishing the panels for a great screen; and, while all exhibited great dexterity and artistic gifts, it was positively wonderful to watch one boy of fourteen years, whose nimble chisel and unerring mallet seemed to make the pattern leap, as it were, alive from the hard wood. He was receiving a man's pay, and seemed to be the pride and favourite of his fellow-artisans.

Dr. Handley says of this young wood-carver: "In his very earliest days he probably played by the side of his father as he carved, while his mother was engaged in some domestic occupation close by, or worked as a cooly near her husband. As soon as he could hold a piece of charcoal he would have begun to draw outlines on a board, sketching and re-sketching, it might be the features of Gunesli, the Elephant-headed God of Wisdom, who should be invoked at the beginning of all labour; or perhaps a flower. In time, without conscious effort and with a keen sense of pleasure, he could draw these objects with his eyes shut. Hand and eye insensibly acquired power and precision, so that his art became a part of his nature at the time when his mind was most impressionable and his fingers most capable of acting in unison with it. From drawing he advanced to coarse



carving of window or door frames or spinning-wheels; and when intrusted with finer work he copied the designs of his father and his friends: and, perhaps, when he attains manhood. he will one day hit upon a new design which may be liked by the craft and be imitated, and so become a permanent addition to the number of grand traditional patterns which represent the experience and sense of the beautiful of all ages.

#### THE OBSERVATORY OF JEY SINGH

At the second gate of the palace a great square is entered. with marble pavilions in the centre. and on one side the painted lattices of the zenana. on the other a temple of Krishua and the astronomical observatory of the famous Jey Singh. who founded the modern city. This Jeypore Observatory is the largest of five, which were erected here and at Delhi, Mathura, Benares, and Ujain. by Maharajah Sawai Jey Singh, early in the eighteenth century. He founded Jeypore in A.D. 1728 and died in 1743, solved many astronomical problems. and patronised art and learning of all kinds, besides taking a very prominent part in the political events of his time. Before his days the instruments employed by Eastern astronoumers were of brass, and on too small a

scale for accuracy; hence the construction of these enormous edifices of masonry, which tower on all sides in quaint shapes of stone and metal; the huge Nariol, or sun-dial; the Druv Nal, or pointer to the North Pole; the Yantr Samrat, "King of Dials," one hundred and eighty-nine feet high, registering the true sun time; and a variety of other ancient and wonderful instruments. Passing by the great astronomical court and passing through a wilderness of marvellous archways and fanciful buildings, the grand entrance of the palace, the Siran Deorhi, is now attained, beyond which stands, in another splendid square, the Hall of the Nobles, girdled with marble columns, and the Diwan-i-Am, or Hall of Public Audience.

### THE SILVER HOUSE

A small gate to the west next brings you to the Chanda Mahal, or "Silver House," the heart and marvel of all this immense abode. Seven stories of such wild and lovely structure as you would expect to see only in dreams rise here one above the other in rose-red and snowy-white balconies, windows, arches, pillars, lattices, and domes go everywhere with paintings and carved flowers. In the lowest floor, which is kept—like the second and third—as a winter residence, we are

permitted to inspect a priceless volume. the abstract of the *Mahabharata* in Persian, made by the orders of Akbar the Great at a cost of forty thousand pounds. and illustrated in the most exquisite manner with coloured and gilded miniature pictures, all painted beautifully. The Shobha Newas. one floor above. is full of strange paintings on the wall, and arched passages embellished with gorgeous shells of copper and silver. Next we ascend to the Chhabi Newas, or "Hall of Splendour," shining with polished marbles and coloured glass. Above this is the Shish Mahal. the hall of glass, with endless patterns wrought in little mirrors let into carved plaster-work; and above that we step forth upon the Mokt, or "Crown" of the palace, where the vast flat roof is encircled with shady alcoves and open chambers. vaulted by graceful curved domes. Beneath lie the green palace-gardens, full of pomegranates, palms, and bananas; and beyond, the spread of the countless busy streets and lanes, girdled by the walls, and overhung by the encircling hills. topped with forts and temples. It is vain to attempt any description of that enchanting prospect of royal houses. busy streets. beautiful gardens and green country-sides. more novel and absorbing than any other which India herself can offer. Nature and

man have here allied themselves to produce the most perfect and lovely landscape conceivable. In green and gold, in rose colour and white, in distant dim blues and greys, the pleasancess and the city and the far-off walls and mountain ridges of Amber group together at our feet, a picture to delight the eye and feast the mind.

—*India Revisited*

XXXVII  
THE ADVANTAGES OF HAVING ONE LEG

G. K. CHESTERTON

A FRIEND of mine who was visiting a poor woman in bereavement and casting about for some phrase of consolation that should not be either insolent or weak, said at last, "I think one can live through the great sorrows and even be the better. What wears one is the little worries." "That's quite right, mum," answered the old woman with emphasis. "and I ought to know, seeing I've had ten of 'em." It is, perhaps, in this sense that it is most true that little worries are most wearing. In its vaguer significance the phrase, though it contains a truth, contains also some possibilities of self-deception and error. People who have both small troubles and big ones have the right to say that they find the small ones the most bitter; and it is undoubtedly true that the back which is bowed under loads incredible can feel a faint addition to those loads; a giant holding up the earth and all its animal creation might still find the grasshopper a burden. But I am afraid that the maxim that the smallest worries are the worst is sometimes used or

abused by people, because they have nothing but the very smallest worries. The lady may excuse herself for reviling the crumpled rose-leaf by reflecting with what extraordinary dignity she would wear the crown of thorns—if she had to. The gentleman may permit himself to curse the dinner and tell himself that he would behave much better if it were a mere matter of starvation. We need not deny that the grasshopper on man's shoulder is a burden: but we need not pay much respect to a gentleman who is always calling out that he would rather have an elephant when he knows there are no elephants in the country. We may concede that a straw may break the camel's back, but we like to know that it really is the last straw and not the first.

I grant that those who have serious wrongs have a real right to grumble, so long as they grumble about something else. It is a singular fact that if they are sane they almost always do grumble about something else. To talk quite reasonably about your own quite real wrongs is the quickest way to go off your head. But people with great troubles talk about little ones, and the man who complains of the crumpled rose-leaf very often has his flesh full of the thorns. But if a man has commonly a very clear and happy daily life then I think

we are justified in asking that he shall not make mountains out of molehills. I do not deny that molehills can sometimes be important. Small annoyances have this evil about them. that they can be more abrupt because they are more invisible: they cast no shadow before. they have no atmosphere. No one ever had a mystical premonition that he was going to tumble over a hassock. William III died by falling over a molehill: I do not suppose that with all his varied abilities he could have managed to fall over a mountain. But when all this is allowed for. I repeat that we may ask a happy man (not William III) to put up with pure inconveniences. and even make them part of his happiness. Of positive pain or positive poverty I do not here speak. I speak of those innumerable accidental limitations that are always falling across our path—bad weather. confinement to this or that house or room. failure of appointments or arrangements. waiting at railway stations. missing posts. finding unpunctuality when we want punctuality. or. what is worse. finding punctuality when we don't. It is of the poetic pleasures to be drawn from all these that I sing—I sing with confidence because I have recently been experimenting in the poetic pleasures which arise from having to sit in one chair with a

sprained foot, with the only alternative course of standing on one leg like a stork. A stork is a poetic simile: therefore I eagerly adopted it.

To appreciate anything we must always isolate it, even if the thing itself symbolizes something other than isolation. If we wish to see what a house is it must be a house in some uninhabited landscape. If we wish to depict what a man really is we must depict a man alone in a desert or on a dark sea sand. So long as he is a single figure he means all that humanity means; so long as he is solitary he means human society: so long as he is solitary he means sociability and comradeship. Add another figure and the picture is less human—not more so. One is company, two is none: If you wish to symbolize human building draw one dark tower on the horizon; if you wish to symbolize light let there be one star in the sky. Indeed, all through that strangely lit season which we call our day there is, but one star in the sky—a large, fierce star which we call the sun. One sun is splendid; six suns would be only vulgar. One Tower of Giotto is sublime: a row of Towers of Giotto would be only like a row of white posts. The poetry of art is in beholding the single tower; the poetry of nature in seeing the single tree; the



poetry of love in following the single woman; the poetry of religion in worshipping the single star. And so, in the same pensive lucidity, I find the poetry of all human anatomy in standing on a single leg. To express complete and perfect leggishness the leg must stand in sublime isolation. like the tower in the wilderness. As Ibsen so finely says, the strongest leg is that which stands most alone.

This lonely leg on which I rest has all the simplicity of some Doric column. The students of architecture tell us that the only legitimate use of a column is to support weight. This column of mine fulfils its legitimate function. It supports weight. Being of an animal and organic consistency, it may even improve by the process, and during these few days that I am thus unequally balanced the helplessness or dislocation of the one leg may find compensation in the astonishing strength and classic beauty of the other leg. Mrs. Mountstuart Jenkinson in Mr. George Meredith's novel might pass by at any moment, and seeing me in the stork-like attitude would exclaim. with equal admiration and a more literal exactitude. "He has a leg." Notice how this famous literary phrase supports my contention touching this isolation of any admirable thing. Mrs. Mountstuart

Jenkinson, wishing to make a clear and perfect picture of human grace, said that Sir Willoughby Patternc had a leg. She delicately glossed over and concealed the clumsy and offensive fact that he had really two legs. Two legs were superfluous and irrelevant, a reflection, and a confusion. Two legs would have confused Mrs. Mountstuart Jenkinson like two monuments in London. That having had one good leg he should have another—this would be to use vain repetitions as the Gentiles do. She would have been as much bewildered by him as if he had been a centipede.

All pessimism has a secret optimism for its object. All surrender of life, all denial of pleasure, all darkness, all austerity, all desolation has for its real aim this separation of something so that it may be poignantly and perfectly enjoyed. I feel grateful for the slight sprain which has introduced this mysterious and fascinating division between one of my feet and the other. The way to love anything is to realize that it might be lost. In one of my feet I can feel how strong and splendid a foot is; in the other I can realize how very much otherwise it might have been. The moral of the thing is wholly exhilarating. This world and all our powers in it are far more awful and beautiful than we ever know

until some accident reminds us. If you wish to perceive that limitless felicity, limit yourself if only for a moment. If you wish to realize how fearfully and wonderfully God's image is made, stand on one leg. If you want to realize the splendid vision of all visible things, wink the other eye.

—*Tremendous Trifles*

## XXXVIII BEREAVEMENTS

RABINDRANATH TAGORE

IN the meantime death made its appearance in our family. Before this I had never met Death face to face. When my mother died I was quite a child. She had been ailing for quite a long time, and we did not even know when her malady had taken a fatal turn. She used all along to sleep on a separate bed in the same room with us. Then in the course of her illness she was taken for a boat trip on the river, and on her return a room on the third storey of the inner apartments was set apart for her.

On the night she died we were fast asleep in our room downstairs. At what hour I cannot tell, our old nurse came running in weeping and crying: "Oh my little ones, you have lost your all!" My sister-in-law rebuked her and led her away, to save us the sudden shock at dead of night. Half awakened by her words, I felt my heart sink within me, but could not make out what had happened. When in the morning we were told of her death, I could not realise all that it meant for me.

As we came out into the verandah we saw my mother laid on a bedstead in the courtyard. There was nothing in her appearance which showed death to be terrible. The aspect which death wore in that morning light was as lovely as a calm and peaceful sleep. and the gulf between life and its absence was not brought home to us.

Only when her body was taken out by the main gateway, and we followed the procession to the cremation ground, did a storm of grief pass through me at the thought that mother would never return by this door and take again her accustomed place in the affairs of her household. The day wore on, we returned from the cremation, and as we turned into our lane I looked up at the house towards my father's rooms on the third storey. He was still in the front verandah sitting motionless in prayer.

She who was the youngest daughter-in-law of the house took charge of the motherless little ones. She herself saw to our food and clothing and all other wants, and kept us constantly near, so that we might not feel our loss too keenly. One of the characteristics of the living is the power to heal the irreparable, to forget the irreplaceable. And in early life this power is strongest, so that no blow penetrates too deeply, no scar is left

permanently. Thus the first shadow of death which fell on us left no darkness behind; it departed as softly as it came, only a shadow.

When, in later life, I wandered about like a madcap, at the first coming of spring, with a handful of half-blown jessamines tied in a corner of my muslin scarf, and as I stroked my forehead with the soft, rounded, tapering buds, the touch of my mother's fingers would come back to me: and I clearly realised that the tenderness which dwelt in the tips of those lovely fingers was the very same as that which blossoms every day in the purity of these jessamine buds; and that whether we know it or not, this tenderness is on the earth in boundless measure.

The acquaintance which I made with Death at the age of twenty-four was a permanent one, and its blow has continued to add itself to each succeeding bereavement in an everlengthening chain of tears. The lightness of infant life can skip aside from the greatest of calamities, but with age evasion is not so easy, and the shock of that day I had to take full on my breast.

That there could be any gap in the unbroken procession of the joys and sorrows of life was a thing I had no idea of. I could therefore see nothing beyond, and this life I had accepted as all in all. When of a sudden

death came. and in a moment made a gaping rent in its smooth-seeming fabric, I was utterly bewildered. All around. the trees, the soil, the water. the sun, the moon, the stars, remained as immovably true as before; and yet the person who was as truly there. who, through a thousand points of contact with life, mind and heart, was ever so much more true for me. had vanished in a moment like a dream. What perplexing self-contradiction it all seemed to me as I looked around! How was I ever to reconcile that which remained with that which had gone?

The terrible darkness which was disclosed to me through this rent. continued to attract me night and day as time went on. I would ever and anon return to take my stand there and gaze upon it, wondering what there was left in place of what had gone. Emptiness is a thing man cannot bring himself to believe in; that which is *not*; is untrue; that which is untrue, is not. So our efforts to find something, where we see nothing, are unceasing.

Just as a young plant surrounded by darkness, stretches itself, as it were on tiptoe, to find its way out into the light, so when death suddenly throws the darkness of negation round the soul it tries and tries to rise into the light of affirmation. And what other sorrow is

comparable to the state wherein darkness prevents the finding of a way out of the darkness?

And yet in the midst of this unbearable grief, flashes of joy seemed to sparkle in my mind, now and again, in a way which quite surprised me. That life was not a stable permanent fixture was itself the sorrowful tidings which helped to lighten my mind. That we were not prisoners for ever within a solid stone wall of life was the thought which unconsciously kept coming uppermost in rushes of gladness. That which I had held I was made to let go—this was the sense of loss which distressed me,—but when at the same moment I viewed it from the standpoint of freedom gained, a great peace fell upon me.

The all-pervading pressure of worldly existence compensates itself by balancing life against death, and thus it does not crush us. The terrible weight of an unopposed life-force has not to be endured by man,—this truth came upon me that day as a sudden, wonderful revelation.

With the loosening of the attraction of the world, the beauty of nature took on for me a deeper meaning. Death had given me the correct perspective from which to perceive the world in the fulness of its beauty, and as



I saw the picture of the Universe against the background of Death I found it entrancing.

At this time I was attacked with a recrudescence of eccentricity in thought and behaviour. To be called upon to submit to the customs and fashions of the day, as if they were something soberly and genuinely real, made me want to laugh. I could not take them seriously. The burden of stopping to consider what other people might think of me was completely lifted off my mind. I have been about in fashionable book shops with a coarse sheet draped round me as my only upper garment, and a pair of slippers on my bare feet. Through hot and cold and wet I used to sleep out on the verandah of the third storey. There the stars and I could gaze at each other, and no time was lost in greeting the dawn.

This phase had nothing to do with any ascetic feeling. It was more like a holiday spree as the result of discovering the schoolmaster Life with his cane to be a myth, and thereby being able to shake myself free from the petty rules of his school. If, on waking one fine morning we were to find gravitation reduced to only a fraction of itself, would we still demurely walk along the high road? Would we not rather skip over many-storied houses for a change, or on encountering the monument

take a flying jump, rather than trouble to walk round it? That was why, with the weight of worldly life no longer clogging my feet, I could not stick to the usual course of convention.

Alone on the terrace in the darkness of night I groped all over like a blind man trying to find upon the black stone gate of death some device or sign. Then when I woke with the morning light falling on that unscreened bed of mine, I felt, as I opened my eyes, that my enveloping haze was becoming transparent; and, as on the clearing of the mist the hills and rivers and forests of the scene shine forth, so the dew-washed picture of the world-life, spread out before me, seemed to become renewed and ever so beautiful.

—*Reminiscence.*

## XXXIX

### ON UMBRELLA MORALS

#### ALPHA OF THE PLOUGH

A SHARP shower came on as I walked along the Strand, but I did not put up my umbrella. The truth is I couldn't put up my umbrella. The frame would not work for one thing, and if it had worked, I would not have put the thing up, for I would no more be seen under such a travesty of an umbrella than Falstaff would be seen marching through Coventry with his regiment of ragamuffins. The fact is, the umbrella is not my umbrella at all. It is the umbrella of some person who I hope will read these lines. He has got my silk umbrella. I have got the cotton one he left in exchange. I imagine him flaunting along the Strand under my umbrella, and throwing a scornful glance at the fellow who was carrying his abomination and getting wet into the bargain. I daresay the rascal chuckled as he eyed the said abomination. "Ah," he said gaily to himself, "I did you in that time, old boy. I know that thing. It won't open for nuts. And it folds up like a sack. Now, this umbrella . . ."

But I leave him to his unrighteous communings. He is one of those people who have what I may call an umbrella conscience. You know the sort of person I mean. He would never put his hand in another's pocket, or forge a cheque or rob a till—not even if he had the chance. But he will swop umbrellas, or forget to return a book, or take a rise out of the railway company. In fact he is a thoroughly honest man who allows his honesty the benefit of the doubt. Perhaps he takes your umbrella at random from the barber's stand. He knows he can't get a worse one than his own. He may get a better. He doesn't look at it very closely until he is well on his way. Then, "Dear me! I've taken the wrong umbrella," he says, with an air of surprise, for he likes really to feel that he has made a mistake. "Ah, well, it's no use going back now. He'd be gone. And I've left him mine!"

It is thus that we play hide and seek with our own conscience. It is not enough not to be found out by others; we refuse to be found out by ourselves. Quite impeccable people, people who ordinarily seem unspotted from the world, are afflicted with umbrella morals. It was a well-known preacher who was found dead in a first-class railway carriage with a third-class ticket in his pocket.

And as for books, who has any morals where they are concerned? I remember some years ago the library of a famous divine and literary critic, who had died, being sold. It was a splendid library of rare books, chiefly concerned with seventeenth-century writers, about whom he was a distinguished authority. Multitudes of the books had the marks of libraries all over the country. He had borrowed them and never found a convenient opportunity of returning them. They clung to him like precedents to law. Yet he was a holy man and preached admirable sermons, as I can bear witness. And, if you press me on the point, I shall have to own that it is hard to part with a book you have come to love.

Indeed, the only sound rule about books is that adopted by the man who was asked by a friend to lend him a certain volume. "I'm sorry," he said, "but I can't." "Haven't you got it?" asked the other. "Yes, I've got it," he said, "but I make it a rule never to lend books. You see, nobody ever returns them. I know it is so from my own experience. Here, come with me." And he led the way to his library. "There," said he, "four thousand volumes. Every-one-of-'em-borrowed." No, never lend books. You can't trust your dearest friend there. I know. Where is that *Gil Blas* gone?

Eh? And that *Silvio Pellico*? And . . . But why continue the list? . . . He knows. He knows.

And hats. There are people who will exchange hats. Now that is unpardonable. That goes outside that dim borderland of conscience where honesty and dishonesty dissemble. No one can put a strange hat on without being aware of the fact. Yet it is done. I once hung a silk hat up in the smoking-room of the House of Commons. When I wanted it, it was gone. And there was no silk hat left in its place. I had to go out bare-headed through Palace Yard and Whitehall to buy another. I have often wondered who was the gentleman who put my hat on and carried his own in his hand. Was he a Tory? Was he a Radical? It can't have been a Labour man, for no Labour man could put a silk hat on in a moment of abstraction. The thing would scorch his brow. Fancy Will Crooks in a silk hat! One would as soon dare to play with the fancy of the Archbishop of Canterbury in a bowler—a thought which seems almost impious.

It is possible, of course, that the gentleman who took my silk umbrella did really make a mistake. Perhaps if he knew the owner he would return it with his compliments. The thing has been done. Let me give

an illustration. I have myself exchanged umbrellas often. I hope I have done it honestly, but one can never be quite sure. Indeed, now I come to think of it, that silk umbrella itself was not mine. It was one of a long series of exchanges in which I had sometimes gained and sometimes lost. My most memorable exchange was at a rich man's house where I had been invited to dine with some politicians. It was summer-time, and the weather being dry I had not occasion for some days afterwards to carry an umbrella. Then one day a sensation reigned in our household. There had been discovered in the umbrella-stand an umbrella with a gold band and a gold tassel, and the name of a certain statesman engraved upon it. There had never been such a super-umbrella in our house before. Before its golden splendours we were at once humbled and terrified—humbled by its magnificence, terrified by its presence. I felt as though I had been caught in the act of stealing the British Empire. I wrote a hasty letter to the owner, told him I admired his politics, but had never hoped to steal his umbrella; then hailed a cab, and took the umbrella and the note to the nearest dispatch office.

He was very nice about it, and in returning my own umbrella took all the blame on himself. "What," he

said, "between the noble-looking gentleman who thrust a hat on my head, and the second noble-looking gentleman who handed me a coat, and the third noble-looking gentleman who put an umbrella in my hand, and the fourth noble-looking gentleman who flung me into a carriage, I hadn't the least idea what I was taking. I was too bewildered by all the noble flunkeys to refuse anything that was offered me."

Be it observed, it was the name on the umbrella that saved the situation in this case. That is the way to circumvent the man with an umbrella conscience. I see him eying his exchange with a secret joy; then he observes the name and address and his solemn conviction that he is an honest man does the rest. After my experience to-day, I think I will engrave my name on my umbrella. But not on that baggy thing standing in the corner. I do not care who relieves me of that. It is anybody's for the taking.

—*Pebbles on the Shore*



## NOTES

### I

#### ADVENTURES OF A SHILLING

This humorous sketch, which is also sometimes entitled *The Autobiography of a Shilling*, was originally contributed to the *Tatler* by Joseph Addison (1672—1719). Addison is one of the greatest masters of English prose. Dr. Johnson wrote of his style: "Whoever wishes to attain an English style, familiar but not coarse, must give his days and nights to the volumes of Addison." His contributions to the *Spectator* and *Tatler* are among his most valuable writings.

P. 2, *Sir Francis Drake*: the well-known English Admiral of the Elizabethan period (1540—1596) who often plundered Spanish ships carrying silver from Peru to Spain.

P. 3, *Templar*: a law-student, member of one of the Inns of Temple, now called Inns of Court.

*Twelvepenny ordinary*: a place of common eating where dinners were provided at twelve pence each.

*Westminster Hall*: used for Law Courts till 1882.

P. 4, *The civil wars*: of Charles I.

*This wench . . . . sweetheart*: to be preserved as a token of love.

- P. 5, *Oliver Cromwell*: (1599—1658) the Protector and well-known Puritan leader who ruled England for some time, after Charles I.

*A monstrous pair of breeches*: the Puritans wore very wide trousers.

- P. 7, *The Splendid Shilling*: a poem in imitation of the epic-manner, written by John Philips (1676—1709). Here are the first few lines:

Happy the man who, void of cares  
and strife,

In silken or in leathern purse retains

A splendid shilling!

## II

### A DEATH-BED SCENE

Sir Richard Steele (1672—1729) was the literary comrade of Addison and contributed to the *Spectator* as well as to the *Tatler* which he himself had started. One of the most natural of our writers, he had an excellent command of tender feelings and this piece is typical of his work as prose-writer. This contains a pathetic description of the death of a friend's wife and forms No. 114 of the *Tatler*.

- P. 9, *Favonius*: the imaginary name of another friend.

- P. 11, *a swoon by her bedside*: there is a tradition that Steele was so overwhelmed with emotion when

writing this, that he could not proceed beyond this sentence, and Addison had to complete it.  
*an ancient author*: the reference is to Seneca (4 B.C.—65 A.D.) a philosopher and dramatist.

*Eve*: the wife of Adam both of whom were the original parents of humanity, stationed by God in Paradise.

P. 12, *With thee conversing . . . . . sweet*: The passage is in Book IV of *Paradise Lost*, ll. 639—658.

The words *conversing* and *solemn* in this passage are not used in their present meanings, but in their derivative significances. The former means 'living together' or 'associating' and the latter means 'habitual' referring to the nightingale.

P. 13, *Mr. Dryden . . . . . Milton*: John Dryden is the great English poet of the seventeenth century who made this remark in his *Discourse on Satire*, intended to be a preface to his translation of Juvenal, the Latin satirist who lived in the first century A.D.

P. 14, *Others sat apart . . . . . lost*: this passage occurs at the end of Book II of *Paradise Lost* and describes the activities of the fallen angels after the dispersal of the Infernal Assembly.

## III

## JONATHAN WILD

Henry Fielding (1707—1854) wrote the *History of Jonathan Wild* as an ironical sketch on a notorious highway robber of the time. He tries to prove humorously that he was a great man!

P. 15, *Honosty* . . . . . *Ass*: this is an imaginary derivation meant for fun.

P. 16, *Prigs*: a slang expression for thieves.

P. 19, *the twelve excellent and celebrated rules*: the rules of conduct were supposed to have been found in the study of Charles I after his execution. The following are among them:  
Reveal no secrets; pick no quarrels; make no comparisons, etc.

P. 20, *Laetius* . . . . . *honestum*: to appreciate much honesty, brings great joy to you.

P. 21, *Alexander and Cæsar*: the great Macedonian conqueror who conquered a large number of Oriental countries including a part of India and Julius Cæsar, the great Dictator of Rome (102—44 B.C.).

## IV

## THE MULTIPLICATION OF BOOKS

Dr. Samuel Johnson (1709—1784) was the greatest English Man of Letters of his age. There was nothing about the world of books of his day about which Dr. Johnson was ignorant and he was thus well-qualified to write on this subject. If Dr. Johnson could complain like this about the multiplication of books even in the eighteenth century, it can be imagined how severe his criticism would be of conditions to-day. It will be noticed that while he condemns the indiscriminate multiplication of books, he is still very sober in his criticism and is fair and generous to aspiring authors. It is surprising to find that this complaint is as old as even the Old Testament of the Bible, for it is said in the book of *Ecclesiastes*, Chapter XII. 'Of making many books there is no end.'

P. 26, *forbear any present mischief*: "forbear" is used here as a transitive verb.

*a great book, a great evil*: this quotation has not been identified.

## V

## OF AVARICE

Though David Hume (1711—1776) is remembered mainly as a historian, his essays are also worthy of

praise. Simple and elegant in his style, Hume is forcible at the same time and makes his points with clearness and strength.

P. 28, *Two men . . . . . the story*: Sir John Falstaff is the well-known comic character in Shakespeare, in the two parts of *Henry IV* and also in the *Merry Wives of Windsor*. The reference is to his boast about one of his exploits. See Act II—Scene iv of *Henry IV*—Part I.

P. 28. *pistoles*: Spanish coins worth about 18 shillings each.

P. 29. *intestate*: without making a will.

P. 31, *Monsieur de la Motte*: (1672—1731) French writer.

P. 31. *Styx*: one of the rivers of hell. Hume really intended to refer to Lethe which surrounds the lower world and which people have to cross after death, paying a coin into the hands of Charon, the boatman who ferries people across.

*Prometheus*: punished by Jupiter for stealing fire from heaven.

*The Danaides*: the fifty daughters of King Danaos of Argos who murdered their husbands on the wedding night and were punished to draw water in sieves everlastingly.

*Sisyphus*: a wicked king of Corinth punished in the lower world to roll a huge stone to the top of a hill. The stone keeps rolling down as soon as it reaches the top.

*Minos*: Judge in the lower world, originally a king and law-giver in Crete.

P. 32, *Damn'd to the mines . . . . hides*: a quotation from Epistle III of Pope's *Moral Essays*, ll. 109-10.

P. 32, *Jupiter*: the chief of the gods in Greek mythology.

## VI

### THE SAGACITY OF THE SPIDER

Oliver Goldsmith (1728—1774) is as charming as prose-writer as he is as poet and his style may be looked upon as a model of elegance and simplicity. It is significant of Goldsmith's intellectual catholicity that he should have thought it worth while writing on this subject in his little journal called, the *Bee*. Goldsmith confines himself to natural history in this sketch. He could otherwise have written about its treatment in history and mythology, the inspiration it furnished to Bruce, the great hero and the story of Arachne's transformation into a spider as she presumed to compete with Juno in the

art of weaving. Pope pays a tribute to the Spider's skill in the following lines:

The spider's touch! how exquisitely fine,  
Feels at each thread, and lives along the line.

—*Essay on Man.*

## VII

### ON CONVERSATION

William Cowper (1731—1800) does not rank among the great conversationalists in English literature, like Dr. Johnson, Coleridge and others, but he writes an interesting essay here on Conversation. Cowper's prose has a quiet and subdued charm like his poetry and his style has made his Letters famous, if he is not well-known as an essayist. This was originally a contribution to a literary journal of the period, *the Connoisseur* and Cowper gave it the following motto from the Latin writer, Horace:

Your talk to decency and reason suit  
Nor prate like fools nor gabble like a brute.

P. 42, *The Frenchman in London*: a humorous play of the period containing the satirical opinions of a Frenchman on the people of England.

P. 42, *a valet de chambre*: man's personal servant (French).



- P. 43, *Tuilleries*: a fashionable part of Paris whose buildings were at one time Royal palaces.
- P. 43, *Odd trick and the four honours*: technical expressions used in playing cards.
- P. 43, *Bacchus*: the God of wine.
- P. 44, *harlequin*: mute character in English pantomime.  
*je-ne-sais-quoi*: an indescribable something.  
(French).
- P. 46, *bon mot*: a witty saying.
- P. 46, *hurdy-gurdy*: musical instrument with groaning sound played by turning handle.  
*Gothic*: barbarous from the *goths*, a barbarian tribe who invaded the Roman Empire in the Middle Ages.
- P. 49, *Dunghill Cock*: a Cock which shows its pride by standing on the dunghill.  
*a Swan*: refers to the old superstition that a swan sings sweetly just before its death.

## VIII

## A MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT

Edmund Burke (1729—1797) is perhaps most familiar to Indian readers by the part he played in the impeachment of Warren Hastings. But he has also left

writings of a permanent nature which form a valuable contribution to literary and political thought. The question discussed in this speech to his electors at Bristol is the position of a parliamentary representative with reference to his constituency. Burke's contention is it is not his duty merely to express the opinions of his voters. He does not forfeit his conscience, he maintains, because of his election to Parliament. It has of course been argued *per contra* that the duty of a parliamentary representative is to reflect the opinions of his constituents.

Burke is one of the most eminent orators in the history of England. His prose is ornate and sonorous and not lacking in power, but his style is not very much in fashion to-day, nor is his manner of oratory pursued by our politicians.

P. 50. *My worthy colleague*: Cruger who was also elected to Parliament with Burke, standing first in the number of votes.

P. 53. *rich commercial city*: at that time Bristol was, after London, in population, in trade, in wealth, the greatest city of England.

## IX

### CONSTANTINOPLE

This passage is taken from the famous historical work of Edward Gibbon, the *Decline and Fall of the*

*Roman Empire.* In greatness of subject, breadth of canvas and gorgeonsness of execution, there are very few historical works in the English or in any other language which can be compared with this masterpiece. It is therefore not surprising that the well-known historian, Freeman, said of Gibbon's *Decline and Fall*: "Whatever else is read, Gibbon must be read too."

With the recent establishment of the Republic of Turkey under the auspices of Mustafa Kemal Pasha, the name of Constantinople has been changed into the Turkish, *Istanbul* which is now used officially by the Postal, Railway and other authorities. In a recent book entitled, the *Golden Horn*, Mr. Yeats-Brown writes of Constantinople: "Standing gorgeous and disdainful amidst her hills and waters, Constantinople seemed human; she was a courtesan of conquerors, a vampire living on the blood of lovers. She had sapped the Romans, seduced the Byzantines, leeches the Turks: now she awaited a new lord." It would surprise our readers to know that Gibbon never actually visited Constantinople!

P. 55, *Byzantium . . . . Constantinople*: the original name of Byzantium when it was a small Greek colony was changed into Constantinople when Constantine decided upon making it the capital of the Eastern Roman Empire.

P. 56, *who after the example of the Argonauts . . . . Euxine*: Jason and his colleagues on the *Argo*

when they went in search of the Golden Fleece passed along this route.

*Phineus*: King of Thrace who unjustly punished the children of his first wife, Cleopatra, on the instigation of his second wife, Idæa, by putting out their eyes. Jupiter therefore made him blind and sent the Harpies to keep him under continual alarm and spoil the meals which were placed on his table.

*Harpies*: fabulous creatures in classical mythology with woman's face and body and bird's wings and claws.

*Amycus . . . . . Cestus*: son of Neptune who challenged Pollux, son of Leda by Jupiter and was killed by him when he attempted to defeat him by fraud. The *Cestus* was a strap of bull's hide loaded with iron or lead wound round the hands and arms of pugilists. It was not necessary to have begun the word with a capital letter.

P. 56. *Mahomet the Second*: Sultan of Turkey (1430—81) who took Constantinople in 1453.

P. 57. *Darius*: Persian Emperor, (550—485 B.C.) who invaded Greece and was defeated by the Athenians at Marathon.

P. 58, *Mount Olympus*: well-known in Greek mythology as the abode of the gods.

P. 59. *Diocletian*: Roman Emperor, (245—313).

*Gallipoli*: which came prominently into notice in the Great War in connection with the attempt to force the Dardanel.

*Leander*: the lover of Hero, who used to swim across the Hellespont to meet her and who drowned himself one day under the wrong impression that she no longer loved him. Marlowe has got a poem on this subject, entitled *Hero and Leander*.

*Xerxes*: Persian emperor, son of Darius (P. 42) who also invaded Greece and who was murdered about 464 B.C.

*Homer*: the famous epic poet of Greece, author of the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*.

*Orpheus*: the legendary musician of ancient Greece, the sweetness of whose song fascinated even rocks and beasts.

P. 60, *Immortal rivulets*: because they are mentioned in Homer's *Iliad*.

P. 60, *Agamemnon*: King of Sparta who was the leader of the Greek expedition.

*Achilles*: the bravest of the Greek heroes in the *Iliad* whose followers were the *Myrmidons* a warlike Thessalian race, who are responsible for the present use of the word as 'base servants.'

*Ajax*: the second bravest of the Greek heroes who contended for the arms of Achilles with Ulysses and killed himself because they were not awarded to him.

*Hector*: Trojan hero in the *Iliad*.

P. 62, *Tanais*: a river of Scythia now the *Don* which divides Europe from Asia.

*Borysthenes*: another river of Scythia flowing into the Euxine.

## X

### GENIUS AND IMITATION

Sir Joshua Reynolds (1723—92) was an eminent English painter who was elected the first President of the Royal Academy in England on its establishment in 1768. His lectures to the Royal Academy on the subject of Art can be read in his *Discourses* from which this is taken. The purpose of this paper is to show that even those who are endowed with genius have everything to gain by the study of other people's works which may furnish valuable ideas for the growth of one's own mind. While Sir Joshua did not underrate the value of genius, he was ever preaching the necessity for study and effort.

P. 67. *Michael Angelo* and *Raffaello*: well-known Italian painters. the former lived from 1475—1564

and the latter more usually referred to as Raphael lived from 1482—1520.

- P. 68. *the younger Pliny*: Latin writer (62—154 A.D.), author of several Letters which throw light on his period.

## XI

### THE GENTLE GIANTESS

This essay by Charles Lamb (1775—1834) was originally contributed by him to the *London Magazine* under the name of Elia, rendered famous by his *Essays of Elia*. This essay, however, is usually found in his *Miscellaneous Essays* and not in the *Essays of Elia*. The author of a quaint and allusive style, Lamb is also full of humour ranging from a gentle smile to boisterous laughter. This is a sketch of his Cambridge landlady, Mrs. Smith, the description being transferred to Oxford, perhaps to conceal the identity.

- P. 70, *the maid's aunt of Brainford* . . . . *uneasiness*:

the reference is to a very stout woman mentioned in *Merry Wives of Windsor*, Act IV—scene ii, whose dress is used for disguising Sir John Falstaff notorious for his stoutness. Shakespeare tells us that “Master Ford cannot abide the old woman of Brentford; he swears she’s witch; forbade her my house

and has threatened to beat her." *Brainford* is Brentford in Shakespeare.

*Atlantean*: like those of Atlas, one of the Titans bearing the world on his shoulders. The word is used by Milton in his description of Beelzebub:

Sage he stood,  
With Atlantean shoulders fit to bear  
The weight of mightiest monarchies.

P. 71. *pinguitude*: abundance of fat.

*Sirius*: dog-star which usually appears in the sultry season.

*She dates*: she reckons her dates from a hot Thursday which had apparently caused her considerable trouble.

P. 72. *Maudlin*: Magdalen College, though pronounced *Maudlin*. The adjoining colleges are Trinity and St. John's.—he has really Cambridge in mind. The blank space refers to some friend of Charles Lamb.

P. 74, *Colossus*: a bronze statue of Apollo, 126 feet high which is supposed to have stood at one time at the entrance of the harbour of Rhodes.

Cf. the well-known passage in *Julius Cæsar*:  
Why, man, he doth bestride the narrow  
world

Like a Colossus; and we petty men



Walk under his huge legs, and peep about  
To find ourselves dishonourable graves.

*a tun of Heidelberg*: a gigantic cask with a capacity of 49,000 gallons in the cellars of the castle of Heidelberg.

*need not fear the black ox's pressure*: need not fear the coming of old age, or misfortune; may also mean, need not fear marriage. The origin of this proverbial expression seems to be in the old practice of sacrificing black oxen to Pluto, the God of the lower world.

## XII

### MRS. SIDDONS

This is a well-deserved tribute to the great actress, Mrs. Sarah Siddons (1755—1831) by her contemporary William Hazlitt (1778—1830), essayist and dramatic critic. Dr. Johnson and Sir Joshua Reynolds were among the admirers of Mrs. Siddons and the latter has preserved her features for posterity in his famous picture of Sarah Siddons as the Tragic Muse. She was more successful in tragedy than in comedy, one of her most striking impersonations being the character of Lady Macbeth.

P. 76, "*Tamerlane*": a tragedy by Nicholas Rowe, on the well-known conqueror of the name, not to

be confounded with TAMBURLAINE of Christopher Marlowe, though written on the same subject.

*Alexander the Great*: a tragedy by Nathaniel Lee, with the alternative title. *The Rival Queens*.

P. 78, *Who shall stalk over the stage \* \* tears and blood?*: a description of Mrs. Siddons acting of the part of Lady Macbeth who plays the hostess at the banquet to King Duncan who is murdered, leading to Lady Macbeth's sorrow and repentance and ending in her madness and death.

### XIII

#### DEATHS OF LITTLE CHILDREN

Leigh Hunt (1784—1859) as an essayist, is the master of a simple and elegant style, with remarkable command over tenderness of feeling, like Sir Richard Steele.

P. 80, *A Grecian philosopher*: Solon, the law-giver of ancient Athens.

*flesh-quakes*: trembling of the body, a quotation from Ben Johnson's *New Inne*.

P. 86, *of these is the Kingdom of Heaven*: a quotation from the Bible, *St. Matthew*, chapter XIX.

When people tried to prevent little children from approaching Him. Christ said: "Suffer little children and forbid them not to come unto me: for of such is the Kingdom of Heaven."

*Knowledge of good and evil*: also a quotation from the Bible, (Genesis, Chapter II) from "The Tree of Knowledge of good and of evil" planted by God in the Garden of Eden.

## XIV

## A HAPPY HOME

This sketch of a happy home appears surprisingly enough in the *Confessions of an Opium Eater* by Thomas De Quincey (1785—1859). An eloquent and powerful writer, De Quincey is the author of a large number of essays and miscellaneous sketches, some of which are enlivened with boisterous humour. This is a charming sketch of intimate home life with a good description of the atmosphere.

P. 87, *Valley*: De Quincey has apparently in mind, the valley of Grasmere where he lived near Wordsworth for about ten years.

P. 88, *And at the doors . . . . hall*: a quotation from the first canto of James Thomson's *Castle of Indolence*.

*mell*: mix or confuse, a sense still preserved in the expression, pell-mell.

P. 88. *Mr.* : the reference is to Mr. Thomas Clarkson, philanthropist who played a prominent part in connection with the abolition of slavery.

P. 89. *St. Thomas Day*: 21st December, sacred to St. Thomas.

P. 89. *Dr. Johnson*: See notes to No. 4 in these selections.  
*bellum internicum*: Latin, for internecine war.

*Jonas Hanway*: (1712—1786), a tourist and author who wrote against the habit of tea-drinking and therefore had a quarrel with Dr. Johnson who was very fond of the drink.

P. 90. *a double debt to pay*: a quotation from the *Deserted Village* where Goldsmith describes a chest in the village inn as being contrived a double debt to pay, "A bed by night, a chest of drawers by day."

P. 91, *a parte ante* and *a parte post*: from the part before and from the part after—the tea-pot has been from the past and will continue in the future.

## XV

## RURAL LIFE IN ENGLAND

This beautiful description of rural life in England is by the American writer, Washington Irving (1783—1859) who visited Europe once in 1804 and again in 1815, staying for seventeen years on the latter occasion. He has been called by a great English writer, ‘the first ambassador whom the New World of Letters sent to the Old.’ This is from the *Sketch-Book* which contains numerous other essays of a similar kind.

P. 92. *Oh! friendly to the best pursuits of man* \* \*

*past*: This quotation is from the third book of the *Task* (ll. 290—292) where Cowper laments the fact that the pleasures of rural life are not sufficiently appreciated by modern people.

P. 96. *meanderings*: sinuous wanderings, the word originating from the Greek river Maiandros whose course was of the description.

P. 100, *Flower and the Leaf of Chaucer*: an allegorical poem written by Chaucer, the first great English poet, who is called the Father of English Poetry.

P. 101, *Gothic*: architecture characterised by the pointed arch so-called in contempt at the beginning, after the barbarian tribe of the “Goths.”

- P. 103, *A modern English poet*: Rev. Kennedy who wrote a poem on the death of Princess Charlotte. The poet says that in all ranks of Life in Britain, there is considerable domestic peace and happiness.

## XVI

## SCOTT'S DOMESTIC LIFE

This extract is from the famous biography of Sir Walter Scott (1771—1832) by Sir George Lockhart (1794—1854). Being his own son-in-law, Sir George had admirable facilities to study the domestic life of Sir Walter Scott and could write with authority on the subject.

- P. 106, *etui-case*: small case, etymology unknown.

*the old familiar faces*: a quotation from Charles Lamb who writes a poem with this title—see the Intermediate Selections in Poetry.

*George's Square*: a square in Edinburgh, at the back of the present University buildings where Scott lived for some years.

*lares*: ancient Roman household deities.

## XVII

## HEROES AND HERO-WORSHIP

Thomas Carlyle (1795—1831) writes on *Heroes and Hero-Worship* as a profound believer in the doctrine that the history of the world is the biography of great men. The book was originally delivered in the form of six lectures on the *Hero as Prophet*, the *Hero as Poet*, etc. and this is an extract from the introductory part. Carlyle's vigour as an English writer is due as much to his vivid imagination as to his intensity of thought and emotion.

P. 111. *Luther*: Martin Luther (1483—1546), the founder of the Protestant movement, who is the subject of Carlyle's lecture in this series on *Hero as Priest*.

P. 112. *Odin*: Chief God of the Scandinavians.

*Samuel Johnson*: Dr. Johnson, see notes to selection No. IV in this volume.

*the Divine Founder of Christianity*: Jesus Christ.

*the withered Pontiff of Encyclopædism*: Voltaire (1694—1778) who contributed to the famous *Encyclopedie*, started by the intellectual leaders of the movement for the French Revolution. Owing to his negative and sceptic philosophy, he is called 'the withered Pontiff,' or the *dry high-priest*.

## XVIII

## THE STRUGGLE FOR EXISTENCE

Charles Darwin (1809—1882) has made a great mark on the history of human thought by enunciating his famous Theory of Evolution. This passage explains how there is always a struggle for existence in the world of life. Darwin is not only a great scientist, but also a clear and lucid writer on scientific subjects with a style peculiarly suitable to such exposition.

P. 117. *Lobelia fulgens*: botanical name for the plant, the first word denotes the family and the second word, the species.

P. 118. *Trifolium pratense*: botanical name for the plant known as *Chitbatta* in Hindustani.

## XIX

## THE ACQUITTAL OF THE BISHOPS

In the art of graphic narration, few writers have equalled the eminent English historian, Thomas Babington Macaulay (1800—1859) from whose *History of England*, this pen-picture of a famous event in English history is taken. The Seven Bishops resisted the Catholic leanings of James II who issued a Declaration of Indulgence suspending the penal laws against the Catholics. The Bishops,



who included the Archbishop of Canterbury, drew up a protest. King James prosecuted them for libel, but they were acquitted by the Judges. The Acquittal of the Bishops took place on June 30. 1688.

P. 119. *Nuncio*: The ambassador of the Pope at a foreign court.

P. 119-20, *The solicitor . . . . . known*: it was the practice in those days to lock up the jury in a room till they were able to arrive at a unanimous decision and deny them even refreshments during the time!

P. 120. *Whitehall*: at one time the residence of English Kings. now used as Ministerial offices.

P. 121. *Sir Samuel Astry*: Clerk of the Crown at the time.

*Sir Roger Langley*: Foreman of the jury at the trial.

*Halifax*: George Savile. Marquis of Halifax (1633—1695), was President of Council for some time but was dismissed from the office for opposition to some measures of King James II.

P. 122, *Williams*: William Williams, Solicitor-General who conducted the prosecution of the Seven Bishops on behalf of Government.

*Cartright*: Thomas Cartright, Bishop of Chester who was a tool of James II.

P. 123, *liberties*: places where certain privileges were allowed.

P. 123. *Powis*: Sir Thomas Powis, Attorney-General who conducted the prosecution. Latter he turned against the King.

*Sunderland*: Robert Spencer. Earl of Sunderland. one of the King's advisers who professed himself a Papist.

*Lord Feversham*: the Earl of Feversham, commander of the King's forces.

P. 125, *Finch*: Heneage Finch. dismissed Solicitor-General who was counsel for the Bishops.

## XX

### PORTRAIT OF A GENTLEMAN

This portrait of a gentleman occurs, appropriately enough, in the *Scope and Nature of University Education* by Cardinal Newman (1801—1890) for one of the highest aims of a true university is to evolve the character of a gentleman. 'Gentleman' is one of the finest words in the English language implying qualities an explanation of which is attempted in this passage with success. The word does not admit of a correct and adequate translation into any other language and it is a great compliment to the English that the word has been borrowed into many

other European languages, including French. Tennyson complained about

The grand old name of gentleman,  
Defamed by every charlatan,  
And soil'd with all ignoble use,

but this is a useful reminder that the true significance of the expression is far above the conventional one.

The following definition of a gentleman is by Thackeray: 'What is it to be a gentleman? It is to have lofty aims, to lead a pure life, to keep your honour virgin, to have the esteem of your fellow citizens, and the love of your fire-side, to bear good-fortune meekly, to suffer evil with constancy, and through evil or good to maintain truth always. Show me the happy man whose life exhibits these qualities, and him we will salute as gentleman, whatever his rank may be; show me the prince who possesses them and he may be sure of our love and loyalty.'

## XXI

### A BULLY SERVED OUT

This story of the discomfiture of a bully is from the *Romany Rye* of George Borrow (1803—1881) who specialised in the description of gipsy and out-door life. He has a fine sense of humour, keen love of nature and out-door life and perennial vitality of spirits. The story

is told in the first person by the Gipsy (Romany) hero of the book.

P. 132, *Cheshire cheese*: cheese made in Cheshire, well-known for its high quality.

P. 135, *a stepping-block*: small platform for stepping off from coaches which were usually high.

P. 136, *esprit de corps*: corporate spirit.

## XXII

### THE ELEMENTS OF FRIENDSHIP

Ralph Waldo Emerson (1803—1882), sometimes called the Sage of Boston, is the most eminent and inspiring of American writers of English prose. This is an extract from his Essay on Friendship. Besides his *Essays*, he is also the author of *English Traits*, *Representative Men*, etc., and a few poems.

Truth and tenderness of feeling are, according to Emerson, the two elements necessary for making friendship a success.

## XXIII

## THE PLACE OF ART IN EDUCATION

The most well-known writings of John Stuart Mill are connected with political thought, like his *Liberty*, *Representative Government*, etc., but he has also written on subjects relating to literature and art. This is an extract from his Rectorial Address to the university of St. Andrews on the subject of education on the 1st February, 1867.

P. 145, *Plato*: Greek philosopher, (427—347 B.C.) disciple of Socrates.

*Demosthenes*: eminent Greek orator, (383—322 B.C.).

*Tacitus*: Roman historian of the first century A.D.

*Dantes*: famous Italian poet (1265—1321), author of the *Divine Comedy*.

*Wordsworth*: William Wordsworth (1770—1850), English poet. See the Intermediate Selections in Poetry, in the notes to Wordsworth's *Happy Warrior*.

*Lucretius*: Latin poet, who lived in the first century A.D., author of *De Rerum Natura*.

*Georgics*: four poems on Agriculture by Virgil (*georgos*: husbandman).

*Gray's Elegy*: *The Elegy Written in a Country Churchyard* by Thomas Gray (1716—1771).

*Shelley's Hymn to Intellectual Beauty*: Poem of the name by the English poet. Percy Bysshe Shelley (1792—1822).

P. 146, *Nativities and Crucifixions, their glorious Madonnas and Saints*: Paintings of the Birth of Christ, the Crucifixion of Christ, of Madonna or the Virgin Mary and the saints of Christianity.

*Handel*: (1685—1759), eminent musician.

*Gothic*: style of architecture used in the construction of several Cathedrals of Medieval Europe. stigmatised originally as "Gothic" after the barbarian tribe of the name.

P 148, *Goethe*: Johan Wolfgang Goethe (1749—1832), eminent German writer.

## XXIV

### GREATNESS

Sir Arthur Helps (1813—1875) writes 'essays of a type not very popular to-day, but of great usefulness to the young mind as furnishing ideas of moral value. *His Friends in Council* and *Essays Written in the Intervals of Business* were very popular with the last generation. The outstanding qualities of his style are "simplicity and straightforwardness, sweetness of tone and a certain plain and natural grace." Courage and openness of mind, the

latter expression used in a wide sense so as to include sympathy, toleration, etc., are according to him the elements of greatness.

## XXV

## MY OLD VILLAGE

Richard Jefferies' (1848—1887) essays are mostly Nature Studies and show minute observation and vivid description. Here is a very attractive description of his village as it was in his younger days including an account of the cottagers he knew. The following titles of his books are enough indication of the nature of his work: *The Open Air*, *Wild Life in a Southern Country*, *Wood Magic*, *The Life of the Fields*, *Field and Hedgerow*, etc., this essay being from the last.

P. 157, *My Old Village*: the name of his little village was Coats, on the north slope of Marlborough Downs. Coate Farm in the village was the place of Jefferies' birth.

*John Brown*: one of the labourers employed at the Coate Farm in his boyhood.

P. 162, *Job's shoulders*: the shoulders of Job Brown, the father of John Brown.

P. 165, *Semitic instinct*: instinct of the Semitic race, here used in the sense of the Jewish people well-known for their saving habits.

- P. 166, *Water-bailiff's*: the man (his name was Day according to Jefferies) in charge of the village reservoir.
- P. 168, *Domitian*: Roman emperor of the first century A.D. who passed a good part of his time in catching flies and killing them with a bodkin!
- P. 171, *The pickaxe and the spade . . . . door*: There have been deaths in every house and the pickaxe and the spade have been used to dig graves for them.
- P. 172, *Ptolemy*: classical geographer who lived in the second century A.D.
- P. 175, *a little old man with silver buckles*: the reference is to Jefferies' grandfather, John Jefferies.
- P. 176, *Ezekiel's wheel*: the wheels seen by the prophet Ezekiel in a vision: "And when the living creatures went, the wheels went by them; and when the living creatures were lifted up from the earth, the wheels were lifted up." (Ezekiel, chapter I).

## XXVI

## WHAT I LIVED FOR

Henry David Thoreau (1817—1862) was an American writer whose love for the simple and natural life was so great that he actually went into the forest on



the outskirts of the village of Concord, Massachusetts and lived in a cottage built by himself for two years on fruits and vegetables grown by himself and occasionally going to the village to earn the little money necessary for his expenses. He narrated his experiences in his *Walden* (the cottage was at the edge of the Walden Pond) or *Life in the Woods*. His book concludes with an exhortation to mankind to abandon the feverish hurry of modern civilisation and to lead the simple life. This passage explains the reasons for the step he took in going into the forest to live in the wooden cottage. It may be added that Thoreau was a disciple of Emerson.

P. 177, *Spartanlike*: the people of ancient Sparta in Greece, well-known for their practice of a hardy life.

P. 178, *German Confederacy*: the loose union of the states of Germany before their later combination into a Federal Empire after the Franco-Prussian War.

P. 180, *St. Vitus' Dance*: bodily disorder usually expressing itself in periodical convulsion—so-called from the supposed power of St. Vitus over nervous and hysterical affections.

*Concord*: the village near which Mr. Thoreau lived.

P. 182, *Don Carlos and the Infanta and Don Pedro and Seville and Granada*: Carlos and Pedro are

well-known names belonging to the Royal family of Spain. Seville and Granada are cities in Spain containing many monuments of Moorish architecture.

P. 183, *Revolution of 1649*: the Civil War. ending in the execution of Charles I that year.

P. 184, *avast*: nautical word, meaning 'stop' or 'hold fast.'

P. 187, *tied to the mast like Ulysses*: Ulysses got himself tied to the mast to avoid the allurements of the Sirens when he passed by their island. The story is told in the twelfth book of the *Odyssey*.

P. 187, *point d'appui*: point of support (French).  
*not a Nilometer, but a Realometer*: a meter for measuring real things here and not a distant river like the Nile about which they have only read.

*cimeter*: phonetic spelling for *scimitar*.

## XXVII

### HOMERIC LIFE

Though primarily a historian. James Anthony Froude (1818—1894) has often written on educational and literary subjects. This extract is from his *Homer*

and *Homeric Life* originally contributed to *Fraser's Magazine* and later included in the first volume of his *Short Studies on Great Subjects*.

P. 189. *Tyrtæus*: an Athenian poet sent to help the Spartans in war. who inspired the soldiers to courage by his songs.

*Ionians*: people of the Ionian islands of the Mediterranean sea, Homer having lived in them.

*Ares*: Mars, the God of War.

*Thor and Odin*: supreme gods in Norse mythology, fond of fighting.

*Zeus*: Jupiter.

*Mr. Carlyle*: Thomas Carlyle, see notes on *Heroes and Hero-Worship* in this volume.

P. 190, *Ulysses*: the hero of Homer's *Odyssey*.

*princess of Phocæa*: Nausica who helped Ulysses when he was wrecked on her father's coast. The story is told in the sixth book of the *Odyssey*.

P. 191, *The shield of Achilles*: the shield was made for Achilles by Vulcan, see Book XVIII of the *Iliad*.

*Hephaistos*: called Vulcan, by the Romans, the God of fire and the arts which need fire in the execution.

P. 192, *There are two cities*: The following is the description in the *Iliad*:

And two fair populous towns were  
sculptured,  
 In one were marriage pomp and revelry,  
 And brides in gray procession, through  
the streets  
 With blazing torches from their chambers  
borne,  
 While frequent rose the hymeneal song.  
 Youths whirl'd around in joyous dance,  
with sound  
 Of flute and harp; and standing at their  
doors,  
 Admiring women on the pageant gazed.

\* \* \* \*

Before the second town two armies lay  
 In arms refulgent; to destroy the town  
 Th' assailants threatened, or among  
themselves  
 Of all the wealth within the city stor'd  
 An equal half as ransom to divide.

P. 193, *Rubens-like*: like pictures painted by the famous Belgian painter, Peter Paul Rubens, (1577—1640).

P. 194, *Nibelungen*: the Nibelung Kings of Norse mythology celebrated also in the *Nibelungen Lied*, a German epic of the 13th century.

P. 197. *Nibelungen Lied*: see note above.

*Swabian poet*: poet of Swabia. a name now confined to the Bavarian province with its capital Augsburg, but in the Middle Ages, a province of Germany whose kings were always fighting. The reference is to the unknown author of the *Nibelungen Lied*.

*the magnificent scene*: see Book XXI of the *Iliad*.

P. 197, *Poseidon*: Neptune.

*Hector*: one of the Trojan heroes, son of Priam.

P. 198, *Criemhilda's Hall*: the terrible Hall of Criemhilda or Kreimhild (the Gudrun of the Northern Saga) 'on whose account many a noble knight was doomed to perish,' one of the most cruel characters in the mediæval poem of the *Nibelungen Lied*. She killed her own children to take revenge on her husband and is therefore called, the 'Devil-Woman' in the book. Horrified by her cruel deeds, Sir Hildebrand of Bern killed her.

## XXVIII

### THE OPEN SKY

John Ruskin (1819—1900) deserves double recognition, as a great master of English prose style and also as a prophet of art. By books like *Modern Painters*, *Stones*

of Venice, etc., he did much to propagate an appreciation of the beautiful and this exhortation to admire the Open Sky is typical of his work.

P. 200, "*too bright nor good for human nature's daily food:*" a quotation from Wordsworth's *She Was a Phantom of Delight*.

P. 201. *God is not in the earthquake . . . . . voice:* a quotation from the Bible. I Kings XIX—12: "And after the earthquake a fire; but the Lord was not in the fire: and after the fire a still small voice." 'A still small voice' is the conscience in man.

## XXIX

### A LIBERAL EDUCATION

Like Charles Darwin, Thomas Huxley (1825—1896) was not only an eminent scientist but also a good writer of English prose. He took much interest in religious and philosophical controversy and was the wielder of an eloquent and at the same time clear style. This is from an address delivered to the South London Working Men's College: the full title was a *Liberal Education; and Where to Find It*.

P. 204, *Retzsch*: Moritz Retzsch, a German painter (1779—1857) who illustrated the works of Goethe, Schiller, etc.

- P. 206, *Test-Acts*: various Acts passed in England, at one time, for the exclusion of Catholics from the Universities and public offices.
- P. 207, *Poll*: a slang word in Cambridge meaning 'many' by derivation and referring to those who take merely the Pass Course.

## XXX

## PAN'S PIPES

Pan in Greek mythology is symbolical of the spirit of Nature. While he caused joy by playing on his pipes, he also terrified his neighbourhood sometimes, the word 'panic' being derived from his name. This essay is from the *Virginibus Puerisque* (written for virgins and bachelors) of Robert Louis Stevenson, (1850—1894) one of the most delightful essayists of the nineteenth or any other century in English literature.

- P. 210, *Attila*: the barbarian conqueror of Rome (406—453) nicknamed the *Scourge of God*, because of his deeds of violence.

*With Cæsar's ashes . . . . countenances*: the reference is to the well-known passage in *Hamlet*, Act V—i:

Imperial Cæsar dead and turned to clay  
May stop a hole to keep the dust away.

P. 211, *the fire of Rome*: the reference is to the burning of Rome in the reign of the wicked emperor Nero who is said to have actually fiddled when the city was on fire!

*Pan is not dead*: There was a tradition that at the time of Christ's crucifixion, a cry "Pan is Dead" swept across the seas.

P. 212, *The young lambs bound as to a tabor*: an adaptation of the famous words in Wordsworth's *Ode to Immortality*:

the young lambs bound  
As to the tabor's sound.

## XXXI

### ON LIBRARIES

This appreciation of Libraries is from the *Use of Life* of Lord Avebury (1834—1913) more well-known perhaps to readers of the older generation as Sir John Lubbock. whose other books include, *The Pleasures of Life* and *the Beauties of Nature*.

P. 217. *writing in praise of books*: in the *Philobiblion* or the *Love of Books* which can be had in *The King's Classics*.

P. 218. *Captain Cook*: the well-known English navigator (1728—1799).



*Darwin*: see notes to the lesson on *The Struggle for Existence* in this volume.

*Humboldt*: German naturalist and explorer (1769—1859).

*Schopenhauer*: (1788—1860), German philosopher.

P. 222, *We who are engaged in business . . . . have*:  
Lord Avebury was a successful banker and man of business.

P. 223, *Watt*: James Watt (1736—1819), the inventor of the Steam Engine.

*Henry Cort*: (1740—1800) navy agent in London who invented the paddling process and was a great iron manufacturer.

*Huntsman*: Benjamin (1704—1776). English inventor and steel manufacturer.

*Wedgwood*: Josiah Wedgwood (1730—1795), associated with the manufacture of porcelain well-known as 'Wedgwood ware.'

*Brindley*: James (1716—1772), Engineer who designed the Grand Trunk Canal in England.

*Telford*: Thomas (1757—1834), Engineer who built bridges on the Severn and the Caledonian Canal.

*Mushet*: David Mushet (1772—1842), metallurgist.

*Neilson*: James Beaumont (1792—1865), inventor of the hot-blast.

*George Stephenson*: (1781—1848), the builder of the first Locomotive.

P. 224, *Dalton*: John (1766—1844), well-known English scientist.

*Faraday*: Michael (1791—1867), well-known English scientist.

*Newcomen*: Thomas (1663—1729), the inventor of many improvements to the steam-engine.

*Sir Humphry Davy*: (1778—1829), inventor of the Safety Lamp.

*Boulton*: Matthew (1728—1809), Engineer of Birmingham, manufacturer of Steam Engines.

*Lord Sherbrooke*: (1811—1892), at one time Chancellor of the Exchequer in England.

P. 225. *Sir John Herschel*: (1738—1822), English astronomer.

“*Books*,” said Milton, “do contain a progeny of life in them . . . . are”: The quotation is from *Areopagitica*...

P. 226, *Urbino*: a town near Rimini in Italy.

## XXXII

## A STUDY OF BENARES

Sister Nivedita was the name assumed by Mrs. Margaret Noble (1867—1911) when she joined the Ramakrishna Vivekananda Mission in India. She was a devoted student of Indian life and civilisation and wrote besides the *Footfalls of Indian History* from which this extract is taken, the *Cradle Tales of Hinduism* and the *Web of Indian Life*.

P. 227, *the Temple of Vishweshwar*: the most important temple in Benares, Vishweshwar meaning the Lord of the universe.

P. 228, *Mukti*: Sanskrit for salvation.

P. 229, *Barna and Asi*: two rivulets flowing into the Ganges and practically marking the Northern and Southern limits of the city. These two are responsible for the name *Varanasi*, or *Benares*.

*Hom*: *havan*, or oblation of ghee in fire.

*rijks*: or *riks*, Sanskrit for verses. The author adds in a footnote that she has also the Norse *rijks* and *runes* in mind.

P. 230, *the great message*: the message of Buddhism.

P. 231, *Abkariyeh Kand*: one of the sacred places of Islam.

*Dasasvamedh*: literally, "ten horse-sacrifices." apparently the place where ten horse-sacrifices were performed.

P. 232. *gerua*: the ochre coloured robe of the sanyasin (Hindustani).

P. 233. *Elephanta*: where the well-known caves with rock-cut temples are situated.

P. 234. *Nuddea*: or *Nawadwip* in Bengal.

*Bunyan*: John (1628—1688). author of *Pilgrim's Progress*.

*William Blake*: (1757—1827), English poet and mystic.

P. 236. *Bengalitollah*: one of the river-side suburbs of Benares. largely occupied by Bengalis.

P. 237. *Manikarnika*: the central burning-ghat of the city situated on the river. so-called because of the tradition that the ear ornament (*Manikarnika*) of Brahma got dropped there.

*Nirvana*: cessation from birth. Buddhist 'beatitude.'

P. 238, *Jnanam*: knowledge or enlightenment (Sanskrit). implying particularly knowledge of God.

P. 240, *of Akbar's time*: this is a mistake. for Jai Singh, the builder of the observatory now called Man Mandir, was a contemporary of the later Moghul Emperor. Muhammad Shah who

ruled from 1719 to 1748. The Ghat itself was, however, built in Akbar's time by Raja Man Singh.

*Ranjit Singh*: the Lion of the Punjab. (1780—1839).

P. 241, *Panch Kos*: the sacred limits of Benares extending over five *Kos*.

*Salagrams*: small round pebbles worshipped in place of idols.

*V'yasas*: reciters of the sacred books, from Vyasa, the author of the *Mahabharata*.

P. 242, *Latin Empire*: the Roman empire.

*Kropotkin*: Prince Peter (1842—1921), well-known Russian savant.

P. 244, *concierge*: door-keeper or porter.

*Nürnberg*: a city in Bavaria with a population of more than 300,000 more usually spelt as, *Nuremberg*.

P. 246, *ad nauseam*: to a disgusting extent. (Latin).

### XXXIII

#### CULTURE AND CHARACTER

This address on Culture and Character was delivered by Lord Oxford (H. H. Asquith) (1852—1928) before the university of Aberdeen, as its Rector, in October 1910. Lord Oxford was among those illustrious statesmen who successfully combined politics with literature

like Lord Morley. Lord Rosebery, Lord Bryce and others.

P. 250, *Four Scottish universities*: Edinburgh, Glasgow, St. Andrews and Aberdeen.

*Alexander VI*: Pope from 1492—1503. He was guilty of many wicked deeds.

P. 251. *Bishop Elphinstone*: William Elphinstone (1431—1514) founded the university of Aberdeen as King's College in 1500.

*John Knox*: (1505—1592). the well-known leader of the Protestant movement in Scotland.

P. 252. *Sidney Lee*: Sir Sidney Lee (1859—1926), author of a standard *Life of Shakespeare* and Editor of the *Dictionary of National Biography*.

P. 253. *More*: Sir Thomas More (1478—1538), author of *Utopia*. He has recently been sainted.

*Colet*: John (1467—1519), Dean of St. Paul's and founder of St. Paul's School, friend and co-adjutor of Erasmus.

*Linacre*: Thomas (1460—1524), Kings' Physician to Henry VII and Henry VIII and founder of the Royal College of Physicians.

*Erasmus*: Desiderius (1466—1536), Dutch scholar of the Renaissance who did more for the Revival of Learning than anybody else.

*Younger Scaliger*: Joseph (1540—1609), Italian writer and scholar, called the “Younger Scaliger” to distinguish him from his father, Julius Scaliger who was also a well-known Latin scholar and writer.

P. 256, *Sciolism*: Superficial pretence to knowledge.

*Mr. Lowe*: Viscount Sherbrooke, see Notes to P. 167.

*Francis Bacon*: Lord Bacon (1561—1626), author of *Essays* and the *Advancement of Learning*, a scholar of encyclopædic range.

“*A full man*”: a quotation from Bacon’s *Essays, Of Studies*—‘Reading maketh a full man.’

*Victor Hugo*: French writer. (1802—1885).

P. 259. *Archbishop Cranmer*: (1489—1566), English divine. The reference is to the style of his sermons.

*Sir Thomas Browne*: English prose writer (1605—1682) with a gorgeous prose style.

*Gibbon*: see notes to lesson IX in this volume.

*De Quincey*: see notes to lesson XIV.

*Robert Louis Stevenson*: see notes to lesson XXX.

P. 261. *Lessing*: (1729—1781), German writer and critic, author of *Laocoon*.

- P. 262, *The sombre lines of the greatest of Roman poets*: The quotation is from Virgil's *Æneid* X—758-9, translated thus by Conington:

In Jove's high courts the Gods afar  
Look sadly on the unending war,  
And sigh that men to death decreed  
Should idly slaughter, idly bleed.

## XXXIV

## REALITY

In this essay on Reality, Hilaire Belloc (1870), miscellaneous writer and journalist, attempts to point out the difference between things as they are and as we imagine them.

- P. 264, *Ruskin*: see notes to lesson XXVIII.

*The greatest of the French Revolutionists*:  
Danton in a speech in the contention on the  
13th August, 1793.

- P. 267, *Algiers*: in North Africa.

- P. 268, *Armada*: a fleet of battleships, from the Spanish Armada which practically never returned having been destroyed, partly by the fight with the English and afterwards by storms.

- P. 269, *Cerdagne*: part of the Pyrenees in Southern France.

*Tourcarol*: or Tour de Carel, a village in this part of France.



## XXXV

## THE QUEEN'S BEREAVEMENT

Lytton Strachey (born 1880) has acquired considerable reputation as a writer on biographical subjects. Besides his life of *Victoria* from which this extract is taken, he is also the author of *Eminent Victorians* and *Landmarks in French Literature*.

P. 273, *Duchess of Kent*: mother of Queen Victoria.

P. 274, *Albert*: the Prince Consort, Victoria's husband. (1819—1861).

*The Prince of Wales*: Edward VII (1841—1910).

*Civil War*: between the Northern and Southern States on the question of slavery. (1861—1865).

P. 275, *Lord John Russell*: (1792—1878), English statesman who was Foreign Secretary and later Prime Minister.

P. 276, *Choralc*: a metrical hymn sung in unison originally in reformed churches in Germany.

*Luther's*: written by the leader of the Protestant movement.

*The Rock of Ages*: A prayer by Augustus Montagu Toplady, beginning with the well-known lines:

Rock of ages, cleft for me.

Let me hide myself in thee.

(See the *Oxford Book of Eighteenth Verse* for the full text of the poem.)

*Rosenau*: in Coburg. in Germany. the place of his birth.

*Peveril of the Peak*: novel by Sir Walter Scott, called after the hero. Sir Geoffry Peveril, an old cavalier.

*Liebes Frauchen*: "Dear little wife" (German).

*Gutes Weibchen*: "good little woman" (German).

P. 278. *Es ist Kleines Frauchen*: "It is little wife" (German).

### XXXVI

#### RAJPUTANA AND THE RAJPUTS

This extract is from *India Revisited* by Sir Edwin Arnold (1832—1904), the well-known author of the *Light of Asia* who spent several years in India as a member of the Indian Educational Service. Sir Edwin's spelling of Indian names has been retained, in spite of some alterations in the official spelling of the *Imperial Gazetteer*. Sir Edwin's revisit was in 1886 and in some details this description is out of date.

P. 281. *it was at Chittore*: on the occasion of the invasion of Allauddin Khilji. 1303 A.D.

- P. 282, *Dulhai Rao*: the only account of such an episode recorded in the History of Rajputana is at the battle of Untala in 1600 between Mewar and Jehangir at which the Chundawats and the Saktawats fought for such an honour.

## XXXVII

## THE ADVANTAGES OF HAVING ONE LEG

Humorous essays of this type are a special feature of modern prose. Light and graceful. their main aim is to entertain the reader. though it cannot be maintained that they do not convey knowledge. Born in 1874, G. K. Chesterton is one of the most popular of living English writers. Humour, almost amounting to boisterousness in many cases, and love of paradox are among the special features of his style.

- P. 294, *William III*: posthumous son of William II of Orange (1650—1702), Stadhouder of the United Provinces (Netherlands) who died by his horse stumbling over a molehill.
- P. 295, *Tower of Giotto*: tower built at Florence by Giotto, the Italian painter and architect (1267—1337).
- P. 296. *Doric*: pertaining to the Doric style of architecture in ancient Greece. simple and unrefined as opposed to Attic.

*Mrs. Mountstuart Jenkinson in Meredith's novel:*  
in Meredith's *Egoist*. She says of the hero,  
Sir Willoubhy Patterne: "He has a leg."

## XXXVIII

## BEREAVEMENTS

Rabindranath Tagore (born. 1861) the Indian Nobel Prize-winner in literature is undoubtedly more well-known as poet than as prose-writer, but he is the author of novels, short stories and other miscellaneous works in prose. This is from his *Reminiscences*. These were written in 1912, shortly before Rabindranath started for Europe and America for recouping his health. It is interesting to note that this was almost the first time he wrote in English for publication. Most of his other works was originally written in Bengali and later translated into English, by others or by himself.

## XXXIX

## ON UMBRELLA MORALS

"Alpha of the Plough" is the pen-name of a well-known living English writer, Mr. A. G. Gardiner (born, 1865) who was for some time editor of the *Daily Mail*. His light and humorous essays are typical of the modern

type, but are distinguished at the same time by a seriousness of purpose in the background.

P. 306, *Falstaff*: Sir John Falstaff, the well-known comic character in Shakespeare's *Henry IV*, Parts I and II.

P. 308, *Gil Blas*: A novel of adventure by the Spanish writer, Le Sage, translated into English—(or revised in translation) by Smollett.

P. 309, *Silvio Pellico*: the reference is apparently to *Francesca Da Rimini* by the Italian writer, Silvio Pellico.

*Will Crooks*: Rt. Hon. William Crooks (1852—1921), a prominent Labour Leader and Privy Councillor.

*bowler*: bowler-hat, too informal for the Archbishop.

## APPENDIX

### HINTS TO TEACHERS

(N.B.—These hints are not exhaustive, nor are they intended to indicate the range of knowledge to be acquired by the student. They are intended purely as helps to the teacher, to help him to acquire the necessary equipment for an effective teaching of the lessons contained in this book.)

I. *Adventures of a Shilling*: Ask your students to write an essay on the Adventures of a Rupee. The full text of the *Ode to A Shilling* can be found in Chamber's *Encyclopædia of English Literature*, under the article on the author. John Philips.

Courthope's book on Addison (English Men of Letters Series) is the best book of criticism one can study on this writer, especially as it also gives a good account of the social conditions of the period.

II. *A Death-Bed Scene*: Thackeray's lecture on Steele in *English Humourists of the Eighteenth Century* gives an admirable account of Steele's personality whose emotional tenderness is reflected deeply in this paper.

III. *Jonathan Wild*: Make sure that your students understand the irony of this piece. The original furnishes a good deal of humorous matter about Jonathan Wild.

IV. *The Multiplication of Books*: Dr. Edmund Gosse called libraries. "Cemeteries of Books" and wished that the story of the destruction of the Library of Alexandria by the Caliph Omar was historically true. This essay should not lead to any contempt for books. if properly read and taught.

V. *Of Avarice*: Avarice was counted one of the Seven Deadly Sins in the Middle Ages. Please note that 'Of' was used instead of 'On' as at present in all the titles of Bacon's Essay.

VI. *The Sagacity of the Spider*: It would be a satisfactory thing if you could show that this account is even scientifically correct as far as it goes.

VII. *On Conversation*: Dr. Johnson's Conversation, as depicted in Boswell's *Life* is the best practical exposition of the subject. There are also essays on the subject like Stevenson's *Talk and Talkers* and Bacon's *Of Discourse* is also on the same theme, though it is in his essay *Of Studies* that he tells us that 'conference maketh a ready man.'

VIII. *A Member of Parliament*: Students may be asked to write an essay on the central point of this paper. Morley's *Burke* (English Men of Letters Series) is the best book on the writer.

IX. *Constantinople*: It will be easier to teach this extract, if you can have a map drawn on the black-board. You will find one in the *Encyclopædia Britannica*.

There are several volumes of Selections from Gibbon specially suitable for young students which should be placed in the College Library—two volumes in Macmillan's English Literature for Schools, the *Age of the Antonines* and *Narratives From Gibbon's Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire* edited by J. H. Fowler and Selections from Gibbon's *Decline and Fall* edited by H. G. Rawlinson and W. N. U. Dunlop (Longmans).

X. *Genius and Imitation*: There are two cheap and handy editions of Sir Joshua Reynolds' *Discourses* which should find place in the College Library, one in the *World's Classics* of the Oxford University Press, edited by Austin Dobson and another in Blackie's *Standard English Classics* edited by J. J. Findlay. This extract is from the Sixth Discourse, delivered to the students of the Royal Academy on the occasion of the distribution of annual prizes on December 10, 1774.

XI. *The Gentle Giantess*: Lamb's humour can be illustrated from various Essays of Elia which will be appreciated much by students.

XII. *Mrs. Siddons*: If possible, show to your class a reproduction of Sir Joshua Reynolds' portrait of Mrs. Sarah Siddons, found in many portfolios of famous paintings.

XIII. *Deaths of Little Children*: The central idea is perhaps a trifle too difficult for students of the intermediate classes, but it must be possible to explain the difference between Sorrow and Pathos.



XIV. *A Happy Home*: This essay is also sometimes entitled, *A Scene in Winter*. The central idea is that of a snug cottage in winter—and life with somebody you love. It may be a useful exercise to ask the students to write an essay describing their own ideal of a happy home.

XV. *Rural Life in England*: Make sure that a copy of Irving's *Sketch-Book* is in the College Library and recommend it for reading, for its value from the standpoint of style as also from that of matter.

XVI. *Scott's Domestic Life*: There are many excellent abridgments of Lockhart's *Life of Scott*, one of them being Leon Reed's edition in Macmillan's *Pocket English and American Classics*. There should be a copy of Lockhart's *Life of Scott* in the College Library for the benefit of those who like to look into it.

XVII. *Heroes and Hero-Worship*: It will be useful to tell the class something of the great men mentioned by Carlyle as heroes in his lectures.

XVIII. *The Struggle for Existence*: Students of Science will perhaps find it easier to understand this passage than Arts students, but the ideas of this passage must be made familiar to every person professing to become educated.

XIX. *The Acquittal of the Bishops*: There are many selections from Macaulay containing his pen-pictures for the benefit of young students, e.g., *Narratives from*

*Macaulay in Macmillan's English Literature for Secondary Schools Series.* Several essays from Macaulay will also be found in the same series. There is at least one Chapter of Macaulay's History of England which every student of literature ought to read, Chapter III. which is available in many separate editions, for instance, in Longman's *Class-Books of English Literature* and in Bell's *English Texts* as also in Macmillan's *English Literature for Secondary Schools*.

It is impossible to teach this passage with any clearness, without a detailed knowledge of the history of England of the period.

XX. *Portrait of a Gentleman*: Ask the students to write an essay on the subject of a Gentleman and also to elaborate and illustrate this sketch by Cardinal Newman. Stanley Weyman's *A Gentleman of France* is an excellent novel which embodies in its hero, the principles of an ideal gentleman. There is a cheap and good volume of Literary Selections from Newman published by Longmans (Indian Universities' Edition).

XXI. *A Bully Served Out*: There are many cheap editions of Borrow in such series as Dent's *Everyman's Library*, Milford's *World's Classics*, Routledge's *New Universal Library*, etc., while there is a good volume of *Selections from Borrow* (Clarendon Press) with introductory essays by Leslie Stephen and George Saintsbury. There are many interesting episodes in Borrow which can be narrated to your class.

Elaborate and illustrate the idea of a Bully and make sure that your students develop a thorough dislike of the type.

XXII. *The Elements of Friendship*: This is only part of Emerson's essay on Friendship. The whole of it is worth reading. Even if Emerson is rather difficult for an Intermediate student, a copy of his works must be made available in the College Library. There is a handy annotated edition of Emerson's Essays in Macmillan's *Pocket American and English Classics*.

XXIII. *The Place of Art in Education*: The ultimate basis of this essay is the idea of Plato that from the contemplation of one beautiful object, we pass on to the contemplation of others and from the contemplation of beautiful objects to beautiful actions. Read the *Essay on the Beautiful* by Plotinus, a cheap and excellent translation of which (Taylor's) is available (J. W. Watkins).

XXIV. *Greatness*: Invite your class to give its own ideas on the subject.

XXV. *My Old Village*: There is an excellent edition of *Selections* from Richard Jefferies in Longman's Class-Books of English Literature. Make your students write a similar essay on their own village.

XXVI. *What I Lived For*: The full text of Thoreau's *Walden* is available in many cheap editions including one in the *World's Classics*, while there is also a volume of

selections in Macmillan's *English Literature for Secondary Schools*.

XXVII. *Homeric Life*: If your College Library cannot afford to have the four volumes of Froude's *Short Studies on Great Subjects*, it can at least have some volumes of selections, two of which are mentioned below:

*Selected Essays of James Anthony Froude* edited by Rawlinson (Longmans) and *Selections from the Writings of James Anthony Froude*, edited by P. S. Allen (Longmans).

It is idle to attempt to teach this essay without sufficient knowledge of the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* of Homer of which numerous translations are available in English. The cheap translations available in Dent's *Everyman's Library*, Derby's *Iliad* and Cowper's *Odyssey* are quite enough for your purposes.

XXVIII. *The Open Sky*: Acquaintance with some of the writings of Ruskin should be an essential part of the education of a student of literature. There is an excellent volume of Selections from the Writings of Ruskin in Routledge's *New Universal Library*.

XXIX. *A Liberal Education*: Huxley's works are not easily accessible, but there is a good volume of selections from his writings including this passage, in Macmillan's *Pocket Classics of American and English Literature*.

XXX. *Pan's Pipes*: You will get some useful ideas for teaching this paper from the poem, *The Dead Pan* by Elizabeth Barrett Browning which itself is in reply to Schiller's poem, *Gotter Griechenlands*.

XXXI. *On Libraries*: All the books of Lord Avebury should be in the College Library, because they are particularly suitable for Intermediate students. Richard De Bury's *Philobiblion* referred to in the first sentence of Lord Avebury's essay is one of the most inspiring books which have been written on the subject of books. An excellent English translation by E. C. Thomas—the original is in Latin—is available in the *King's Classics* (De La More Press).

XXXII. *A Study of Benares*: Students will appreciate Sister Nivedita's books in the College Library—especially as they deal with Indian life and civilisation—*The Cradle Tales of Hinduism*, *The Web of Indian Life* and the *Footfalls of Indian History*.

XXXIII. *Culture and Character*: Make sure that your College Library has got a copy of the *Occasional Addresses* of Lord Oxford and Asquith (Macmillan).

XXXIV. *Reality*: It is desirable to ask students to write an essay on at least a slightly modified form of this subject, what they expected to see and what they actually saw, with regard to great monuments, natural scenery, etc.

XXXV. *The Queen's Bereavement*: Lytton Strachey's *Queen Victoria and Eminent Victorians* should be in the College Library, though in parts they are undoubtedly difficult for Intermediate students.

XXXVI. *Rajputana and the Rajputs*: There are two volumes of selections from Sir Edwin Arnold. *Selections from Edwin Arnold in Poetry and in Prose* (Macmillan) and the *Arnold Poetry Reader* edited by the poet's son, Edwin L. Arnold (Indian School Supply Depot).

XXXVII. *The Advantages of Having One Leg*: Read some modern essays of the type to the class.

XXXVIII. *Bereavements*: Rabindranath Tagore's *Reminiscences* from which this extract is taken, like most of his other works, is available in Macmillan's Cheap Indian Edition of his works.

XXXIX. *On Umbrella Morals*: Provide all the works of *Alpha of the Plough* in the College Library. *Leaves in the Wind*, *Pebbles on the Shore*, *Windfalls* and *Many Furrows* are available in cheap form in Dent's *Wayfarer's Library*. There is also a small volume of *Selected Essays* from *Alpha of the Plough* in *The King's Treasuries of Literature* (Dent).

(Please insist on your students' using a good and authoritative Dictionary, preferably, the *Concise Oxford*

*Dictionary* of the Oxford University Press. Above all, protect them from using unauthorised and ill-written bazaar notes, especially as notes have been provided in this volume, with the exception of dictionary meanings of words and phrases.

*Dated Ajmer, the 2nd June, 1935. P. SESHADRI.*